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A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

BY

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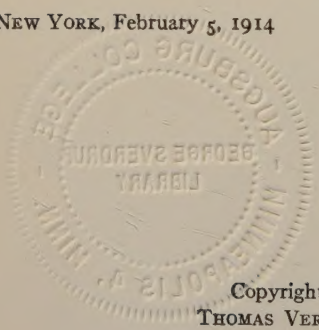

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To

THE MEMBERS OF THE NEWMAN CLUB

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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PREFACE

The present work, which is now laid before the public, was commenced as a series of lectures to the Newman Club at the University of California. These were delivered during the fall and winter of 1908. They were afterwards considerably modified, and constituted a part of the course in the Introduction to Philosophy given by the author at the Catholic University of America. The material has again been worked over and developed into an independent work, which the author hopes will be of service as an introduction to the study of ethics.

The nature of the work is indicated by the title. It is "A Historical Introduction to Ethics." It is, therefore, neither a History of Ethics nor a Textbook of Ethics. Were it a history of ethics it would have been necessary to consider many philosophers who are not even mentioned. An arrangement of systems in historical order would have been chosen, and the logical classification of ethical theories which has here been adopted would necessarily have been abandoned. Were it a textbook of ethics a number of special problems, which it has not considered, would have been worked up into a general outline covering the entire field of ethical speculation.

What, it may be asked, is the special value of a *historical* introduction to ethics? It is the author's opinion that the true approach to an understanding of the science of ethics is first to be sought in the history of the theories of morals. While this is true of ethics, it is not true of the sciences in general. Logic and psychology, physics and chemistry, for example, may well be studied with no more than passing references to

questions of historical interest. This does not mean that a knowledge of the history of these sciences is useless, but simply that it is possible to study them apart from their history.

Ethics, however, differs from most sciences. In its field of thought one great problem towers above the rest, and in comparison to the supreme importance of this problem, all other questions sink into comparative insignificance. This problem is that of the knowledge of good and evil. It is the great problem of the standard of morality. To teach the student one solution to this problem and leave him in ignorance of all the others would not suffice beyond the short time that he remained within the narrow confines of his own school. As soon as his mind came in contact with other minds, he would find himself in the greatest perplexity about the most serious problem of life: the distinction between good and evil. If, however, one attempts to treat this great question at all adequately, it is necessary to enter into the history of moral theories; and thus a historical introduction to ethics becomes almost indispensable.

The study of ethics is the most important step in the philosophical solution of the riddle of existence. What the student therefore demands above all from his course in ethics is an ideal of life. A superficial knowledge of the pros and cons for a number of the minor problems of right and wrong will never take the place of a deeper insight into the greatest question that confronts the mind of man; namely, what is the value of life, what is the end of man? At the same time the minor problems of morality, such as the concepts of virtue and law, the analysis of the special virtues, and so forth, should not be neglected. A number of such problems can be and in the present work have been considered in their historical setting and in their connection with the one great problem of ethical speculation.

In the analyses of the various systems of morals the author has tried to represent each moralist's own thought impartially

and accurately. The attempt has been made to assure the student that the account given really represents the actual philosophy of the moralist in question, and not the author's distorted view of his opinions. To accomplish this result quotations and citations have been given in great abundance. So extensive, indeed, have been the quotations that the work presents to some extent the advantages of a source-book, while it lacks the fragmentary character from which no source-book can escape.

The criticism of moral systems constitutes a special section. In this way the repetition of objections which hold against a number of systems has been avoided. In the classroom, however, the author has departed from this plan. Students require and often request some kind of criticism before the lecturer passes from one system to another. The best plan in actual practice is to indicate the chief lines of criticism in concluding the analysis of an author, and toward the end of the course to summarize the various systems, giving a general and special criticism of the theories of morality. The collection of the points of criticism into one division, while having special advantages in a printed work, need not interfere with the carrying out of the above method in practice, for it is a very easy matter to turn from one part of a book to another.

In the choice of the types of ethical theory scarcely any two men would agree, and the author can scarcely hope to escape the accusation of most serious omissions. Some of these omissions will, however, be pardoned by one who bears in mind that the present work does not pretend to be a history of ethics, that the number of types must be relatively few, lest the student be lost in a maze of detail, and that the author can only hope to introduce the student to the field of ethical speculation.

This really is the end of the work: to aid the student in the formation of his ethical standard. If one lays the work aside with a higher ideal of man's life and work and with the resolve

to be faithful to his ethical standard, he will not have read and studied in vain.

The bibliographical references were not intended to be complete accounts of the literature, but merely to serve as a first means of orientation for one who might wish to study an author more in detail.

The writer wishes to express his thanks to Prof. Pace for his kindly criticisms and his valuable suggestions.

THOMAS V. MOORE.

INTRODUCTION

The tendency to specialization which has marked off for each of the philosophical disciplines a field of its own, is now clearing for each a path of approach. "Introductions" to philosophy as a whole, at first helpful, have become indispensable; and doubtless as the several divisions are more successfully cultivated, the student before entering on any of them will find some sort of preliminary survey both useful and necessary. A complete separation, however, of the sciences is not to be expected. Autonomy, which seems to be the aim in nearly every department of knowledge, presupposes a correct understanding of the relations which must continue to exist between any science and the group to which it, in origin and principle, naturally belongs.

Ethics, because of its bearing on life, holds a unique position. Error in regard to its scope or method entails results that are not purely theoretical. It proceeds indeed from positive data, but its purpose is normative; and it fails of that purpose if it refuse to consider what ought to be, as well as what is, the conduct of men. A study of motives, however thorough, will not solve ethical problems, though it may be of value to psychology; while conclusions drawn from a principle of morality may be quite logical and yet run counter to the plainest requirements of duty. The attempt to reduce ethics to a mere statement of "moral" facts is a failure from the start, since it robs the word "moral" of all definite meaning. But it goes to show how great is the need of correct orientation for the beginner in this science.

The student should be acquainted with those fundamental truths regarding the nature and destiny of man which form the

presupposition of ethics. He should also get a grasp of the more important ethical problems and of the various solutions which are offered by rival schools and current theories. With this preliminary information he will be able to locate his subject and see its parts in true perspective.

But ethics, like every other science, has developed. More than any other science, it has been influenced by men's views of the significance and value of life, by their social organizations and their religious beliefs. To be complete, then, an introduction must include the historical aspect, tracing the growth of principles and the vicissitudes through which ethical systems have passed, either to greater vigor or to decay. There is no better means of attaining a calm yet accurate appreciation of what is now offered under the name of ethics.

By combining the historical treatment with the systematic, Dr. Moore brings to view both the grouping of the principal theories and their development by the foremost thinkers in ancient and in modern times. One cannot but marvel at the achievements of a Plato and an Aristotle, which touch the zenith of human capacity. But for that very reason, the surpassing beauty and efficacy of Christian morality are the more impressive. It did not reject, but rather purified and elevated the pagan conceptions. To the genius of Aquinas was reserved the task of uniting in a final synthesis the purest elements of Greek speculation with the precepts of the Gospel. In his adaptation of Aristotle's teaching, St. Thomas furnishes a model of critical appreciation which should stimulate and guide the student. His writings have suggested the discussion which follows the historical account in this volume and they have defined in clearest terms the ethical ideal which, for the Christian, is no mere abstract conception or far-off result of indefinite progress: it was realized long since in a living Personality.

THOMAS J. SHAHAN.

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PRELIMINARY NOTIONS

1. The Concept of Ethics. Every one is to some extent familiar with the subject matter of ethics. For, roughly speaking, ethical speculation deals with what is right and wrong. And of this matter no one is entirely ignorant, even though he may not know that knowledge on this point belongs to the province of a science called *ethics*.

Rough unanalyzed knowledge cannot be called scientific, but it is the starting point from which science develops. So our rough unanalyzed experience of the moral life is the basis of a scientific knowledge of what is right and wrong, and this scientific knowledge is the science of ethics.

Right and wrong, as our experience tells us, are words that we apply to actions. Experience tells us furthermore that it is not so much what we do as what we intend to do that really is right or wrong. When we intend to do something we are said to will it, and the *act* of *willing* is really the action that is morally good or evil.

The object of the act of willing is what we wish to accomplish or possess. This is always something which we conceive of as, under some aspect, desirable. It is a *good*. A good may be only apparently desirable. In this case it is morally evil; it is a false good. All things desirable may be spoken of generally as goods. Many goods are presented to us and tempt us more or less strongly to go after them and possess them. Which shall I choose? Some I recognize as means to a further end. I see, too, that various men have various ends for which they sacrifice everything else. Life is an important matter. Mistakes made early cannot be corrected later on. What is the real mean-

ing and value of life? Has life any final goal—an ultimate end—a supreme good? This is the question which ethics attempts to answer, and all its special problems in the last analysis focus in this one point.

My voluntary acts lead to or away from this end. When persisted in they develop within me abiding inclinations, termed *habits*, by which I am disposed readily to seek some new type of good. Ethics deals with my true end, the actions by which I actually tend to or away from it, the good habits or virtues which dispose me to seek it with pleasure and promptness, and the bad habits or vices which are stumbling blocks in the way. We may, therefore, define ethics as the science of the supreme end of human life and of the relations of voluntary acts and habits to the attainment of that end.[1]

2. The Divisions of Ethics. Man does not exist as an isolated creature but has personal relations with other intelligent beings. He does not attain his end by himself but along with others—to some extent depending on others, and they in some measure depending on him. The end, therefore, and man's personal relations, suggest the natural division of ethics. A discussion of the end—that is of the nature of morality—gives us what might be termed *general ethics*. The discussion of man's personal relations to this end gives us *special ethics*. Special ethics has various subdivisions. Man's relation to God gives the *ethics of religion*. Man's personal rights and their relations to the rights of others, the *ethics of law*. The *ethics of family* was termed in the middle ages *economy*. Aristotle separated the *ethics of the state* as a special science under the name of

[1] "Aristotle introduced the expression ethical (ἠθικός) to designate a certain class of abilities (ἀρεταί). Thereby he founded the narrower concept of virtue, morality. Thereafter such of his works as dealt with these problems were called by his school—τὰ ἠθικά. At the same time there is found in Aristotle's division of the sciences the expression *Practical Philosophy* for the discipline which develops the rules of human actions. Cicero translated the word ethical, which Aristotle had coined, by *moralis*, and in Seneca, ethics appears under the title of *philosophia moralis*. Hence arose the three expressions which are most frequently applied to the philosophical discipline we are about to treat: Ethics, Moral Philosophy and Practical Philosophy." Külpe, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 1913, II, § 9, p. 78.

politics. In modern times all these branches are often considered under the one heading *ethics*.

3. The Relations of Ethics to the Other Sciences. Since the days of Aristotle, ethics has been one of the divisions of philosophy. It remains to this day a branch of philosophy having never attained even to that quasi independence of which psychology with its experimental methods may boast. According to Aristotle, sciences are either practical, constructive, or theoretical. Practical philosophy embraced ethics and politics. It had to do with the guidance of human actions to their proper end; ethics dealing with the actions of the individual, politics with those of the state. Among the philosophical disciplines ethics is most intimately related to psychology and theodicy. Logic bears no closer relation to ethics than to any of the other philosophical disciplines. It has, however, a certain analogy with ethics. Logic points out the way to correct thinking, ethics to right acting. Logic deals with what *must* be true, ethics with what *ought* to be done.

The relation of ethics and *psychology* is especially intimate. St. Thomas Aquinas recognized their close connection when he wrote: "We cannot come to a perfect knowledge of morals without knowing the powers of the mind." [1] Certainly a full discussion of ethical problems is not possible without treating of freedom, habits good and bad, the influence of emotions on the will, and so forth. In the course of the study of these problems a certain amount of psychological knowledge must either be supposed or communicated. Consequently, for the full development of a system of ethics, psychology is absolutely indispensable. So far, however, very little ethical psychology has been written. The empirical psychology of the virtues and vices has certainly not passed the days of its infancy.

Ethics is very incomplete without a discussion of the relations

[1] Non possumus perfecte ad scientiam moralem pervenire, nisi sciamus potentias animae. In I. Lib., *Aristotle, De anima*, 1.

of man to God. The concept of God, therefore, as developed in *theodicy* crowns ethical speculation with a dignity and sublimity that could not otherwise be obtained. Besides, though man's personal relations to his fellow men give a certain groundwork for the distinction between right and wrong action, the ultimate foundation of the moral "ought" does not rest upon man's relations to man but upon his relation to God. An ethics, full and perfect, therefore, cannot be developed in complete independence of theodicy.

Among the sciences outside the philosophical disciplines, *anthropology*, *sociology* and *political economy* are of special importance to ethics. Anthropology gives a history of the morals of primitive peoples which lays at the disposal of the moral philosopher one of his most important series of facts. Sociology and political economy give an insight into the actual conditions of the present which is indispensable for distinguishing right and wrong in the complex problems of modern life.

4. The Methods of Ethics. The methods of scientific research may be classified under the two headings, *empirical* and *theoretical*. The empirical method deals primarily with facts, and seeks by studying and analyzing them to arrive at general truths. The speculative method seeks by the analysis and comparison of concepts of admitted validity to establish general principles, and thence to deduce valid conclusions. Most sciences have from the beginning been predominantly either empirical or speculative. Logic, for instance, has never been an empirical science, and systematic botany never predominantly theoretical. Unlike most sciences, ethics from the earliest times has made use of both empirical and speculative methods, and even to the present day the two methods have been employed by the most modern moralists. No one can read the Nicomachean ethics without realizing that the facts of the moral life form the groundwork of the discussion. What do men look upon as the

end of life, is the starting point from which, by analysis and deduction, the conclusions of the Aristotelian ethics are finally drawn. If, on the other hand, one reads Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Ethics* he will realize that though the starting point is made in the *Data of Ethics* in biological and sociological facts, nevertheless the distance between facts and conclusions is bridged over by speculation. It is true indeed that, even in the admittedly empirical sciences, generalizations flow from facts making them genuine sciences rather than mere records of observation. But, even in the most empirical system of ethics, one will look in vain for that close connection between facts and conclusions that is to be found, for instance, in a modern textbook on physics.

Notwithstanding the fact that the empirical method cannot be applied without restriction to the data of ethics, ethical systems could be classed as empirical or theoretical according as the weight of their insistence is given to the facts of moral experience, or to the principles of morality.

Beginning with Lord Shaftesbury, modern writers on ethics have all tended, more or less, to accentuate the facts of moral experience as the basis of ethical theory. At first subjective facts were accentuated, and a psychological analysis (Hutcheson and Adam Smith) became the starting point for moral speculation. Later on the importance of objective facts was recognized, and in Spencer's ethics of evolution these became the pillar and groundwork of moral theory.

No matter what the advances made in the future, one can scarcely hope that ethics will become a predominantly empirical science, like physics and chemistry. The advance in psychological method will no doubt open the way more completely to an experimental study of the will, and thereby enable us to base certain conclusions on facts which have hitherto been disputed by theorists. Philological, ethnological, and historical studies will give us a better insight into what men have considered right

and wrong, but, when all that we now hope for from empirical research has been done, the relations of this life to eternity and of man to God will still remain the crowning point of ethical speculation.

5. The Schools of Ethical Thought. The cardinal point in ethical speculation is the problem of morality and the obligation that it imposes. Man feels himself bound to do or not to do certain actions. How can this be? On what does the morality of his actions depend? The answer to this question throws all moralists into either one or the other of two great divisions of the ethical systems.[1] In one, morality is looked upon as purely conditional, having no absolute and eternal character. One ought to do right if he wants to feel contented. But if he does not want to feel contented, so much the worse for him. There is no eternal fitness of things that is violated by his action.

This class of moralists is composed almost entirely of Utilitarians. With it may also be reckoned Rousseau, who, though he has much in common with the Stoics, sided with Hobbes in maintaining that there is no such thing as natural law, and that morality depends exclusively on the customs of society. The chief system of conditionate morality is that which regards pleasure as the standard of right and wrong. Since this system in general looks upon the utility of an act for the welfare of the individual or society as the criterion of morality, it is termed *Utilitarianism*.[2] When pleasure alone is made the stand-

[1] There is nothing original in this division of the systems of morality. As long ago as 1852 a similar classification was adopted by Whewell. "Systems of morality," he writes, "that is, modes of deducing the rules of human action, are of two kinds: those which assert it to be the law of human action to aim at some external object (external, that is to the mind which aims), as, for example, those which in ancient or modern times have asserted pleasure, or utility, or the greatest happiness of the greatest number, to be the true end of human action; and those which would regulate human action by an internal principle or relation, as conscience, or a moral faculty, or duty, or rectitude, or the superiority of reason to desire. These two kinds of schemes may be described respectively as *Dependent* and *Independent* morality." *History of Moral Philosophy in England*, London, 1852, p. ix.

[2] In a footnote to be found in the second chapter of his essay on Utilitarianism (*Dissertations and Discussions* by John Stuart Mill, New York, 1883, p. 308), Mill writes: "The author of this essay has reason for believing himself to be the first person who brought the word 'utilitarian' into use. He did not invent it but adopted it from a passing expression in Mr. Galt's *Annals of the Parish*."

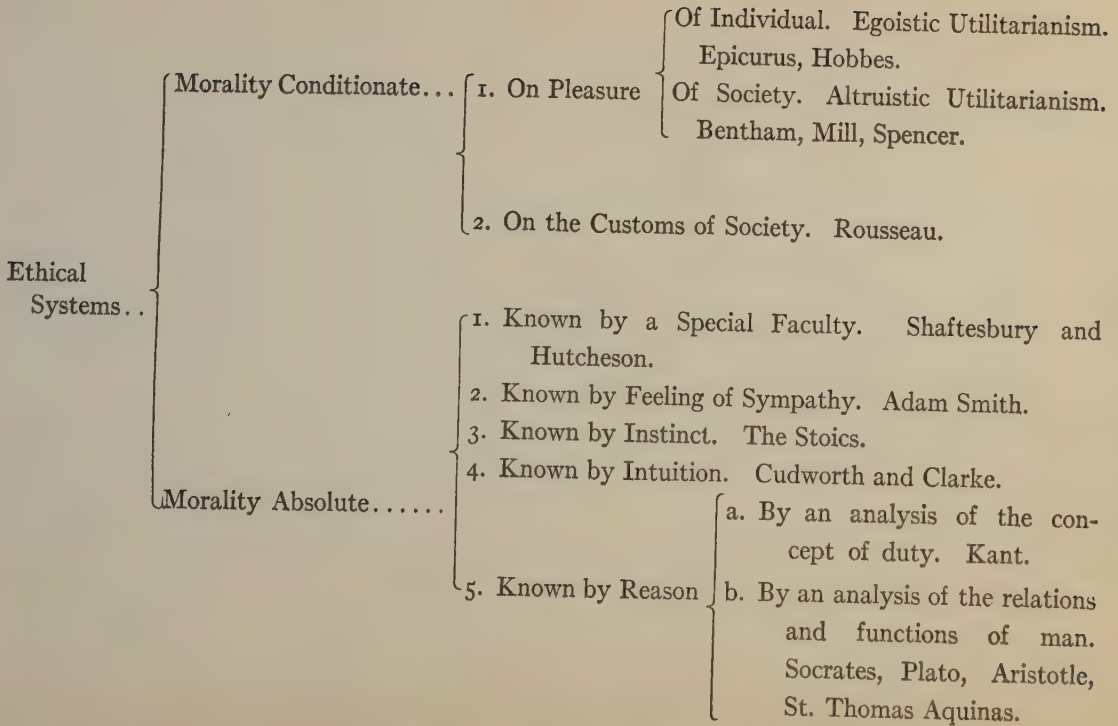
ard of utility, the system is known as *Hedonism*, a word derived from the Greek ἡδονή which means pleasure—especially pleasurable sensation—and is equivalent to the Latin *voluptas*. If the pleasure or happiness of the individual is made the final end, then the system is known as *Egoistic Utilitarianism*,[1] or simply as *Egoism* (*e. g.*, Hobbes). If, on the contrary, the welfare of society is the standard of right and wrong, the system may be known as *Altruistic Hedonism*, *Universalistic Hedonism*, *Altruistic Utilitarianism*, or simply as *Altruism* (*e. g.*, J. S. Mill). Hedonism is also termed *Epicureanism*, from Epicurus, one of its first exponents.

A fundamentally different way of viewing morality is that which looks upon it as independent of our subjective states. We are not right because we are satisfied, but we are satisfied with our action because it is right. Instead of obligation depending upon the way we feel, our feelings flow from our manner of action. So that prior to our feelings there is something which demands that an action should or should not be done.

Moralists of this type may be distinguished by the way in which they claim that the difference between right and wrong is perceived. The difficulty of explaining the simple dictates of conscience by which right and wrong are distinguished led Hutcheson to postulate a special faculty that senses morality as sight does color. His pupil, Adam Smith, thought that this faculty was identical with the familiar sentiment of sympathy. Others again, such as Ralph Cudworth, regarded the intuition of reason as the faculty by which right and wrong are distinguished; whereas to others it is nothing more than reason passing judgment upon conduct.

A full history of ethics would distinguish still other systems. These, however, will suffice to introduce the reader to the ideas and various methods of reasoning of the moralists. The phi-

[1] Sidgwick would limit the term Utilitarianism to Altruism. *Methods of Ethics*, Book II, Ch. i, p. 419, 4th ed., 1890.


Ethical Systems
Morality Conditionate
1. On Pleasure
Of Individual. Egoistic Utilitarianism. Epicurus, Hobbes.
Of Society. Altruistic Utilitarianism. Bentham, Mill, Spencer.
2. On the Customs of Society. Rousseau.
Morality Absolute
1. Known by a Special Faculty. Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.
2. Known by Feeling of Sympathy. Adam Smith.
3. Known by Instinct. The Stoics.
4. Known by Intuition. Cudworth and Clarke.
5. Known by Reason
a. By an analysis of the concept of duty. Kant.
b. By an analysis of the relations and functions of man. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas.

losophers picked out for special analysis have been chosen for the sake of exemplifying a type of thought. The number of types has been limited lest the perplexity of systems should confuse the beginner. The accompanying schema will aid the student to keep in mind the general setting of the moralists we are about to study.

6. The Value of Ethics. Ethics more than any other branch of philosophy has preserved the original ideal of speculative thought—the direction and guidance of the acts of man. Philosophy sprang from religion, and religion never has been and never could be mere speculative knowledge. Religion seeks above all to direct human activity to a divine ideal. Speculation and theorizing are in some manner foreign to religious experience as we know it in our inner spiritual life. At the same time, the interior life gives rise to many problems of speculative thought, and thus religion and philosophy are connected not only by logical association, but also by psychological necessity.

Philosophy at its birth derived from religion that love of wisdom, which directs not only thought but actions to the final goal of human existence. Its real value lies in its power of dignifying and purifying our ideals and our works. To Ethics especially belongs the task of defining in speculative terms the end of human action. Its task, however, does not stop with defining and contemplating the end of man. It defines in order that it may direct. It contemplates the ideal in order that it may stimulate endeavor. It lays down laws in order that they may be followed. It is not a purely theoretical but also a practical science.

Ethics does not take the place of religion, except where religion is lacking. It does not conflict with religion, because the religious ideal harmonizes perfectly with the ethical. Ethics shows that the moral dogmas of religion are reasonable, even independent of revelation. It outlines a schema of ends which religion fills in with living colors.

He, therefore, who studies ethics must bear in mind its practical value. He must seek above all a living standard of life, a rule of action, that he is actually to adopt, an end towards which he will tend consistently ever after.

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PART I

THE ETHICS OF CONDITIONATE MORALITY

CHAPTER I

EPICURUS

7. Utilitarianism in Ancient Times. The origin of Utilitarianism in European thought may be traced back to the Sophists,[1] and was due, as Windelband has pointed out,[2] to the many changes that were experienced about this time in Grecian public life. The repeated alterations of laws and constitutions raised the question in all minds: what is the binding power of legal enactments? They had lost the halo of antiquity and men ceased to obey them simply because they were laws and as such ought to be obeyed. From naïve respect for the ancient lawgivers they passed to a state of doubt in the binding power of all enactments. The opinion was broached that the reason for obedience to the law was the utility of the lawmaker. Thrasymachus [3] is quoted by Plato as saying that the laws are made by those in power, and the rulers reap the advantage of obedience; whereas, Callicles [4] held the opposite view that the people make the laws against those that are in power, and so the weak have protection against the strong.

This question as to the validity of positive law led to the cognate one of the obligation of moral law. If the ground for obeying the laws of the State is purely one of utility, the reason for obeying the dictates of conscience may with still greater propriety be maintained as the welfare of the individual. Further-

[1] A school of itinerant teachers that arose on the breaking up of the earlier philosophic societies, about the end of the 5th century B.C.
[2] *History of Philosophy*, Ch. 2, § 7, p. 72 ff. Trans. by Tufts, 2d ed., 1910.
[3] Plato, *Republic*, Book I, 338–339.
[4] Plato, *Gorgias*, 483.

more, vice is pleasant, virtue oftens leads to misfortune; why then should any one bind himself by restrictions that are not only profitless but positively injurious?

The development of Utilitarianism received a check in the teachings of Socrates (469-399 B.C.), from whom we have the first serious attempt at a systematic ethics. His system lies at the root of the functional ethics of Aristotle and Plato, and will be considered in the next section. The further development of Utilitarian concepts awaited the time when the great thinkers of Greek philosophy had passed away. A new impulse was given to Hedonism by the philosophy of Epicurus.

Epicurus, son of the Athenian Neocles, was born in December, 342, or January, 341 B.C. His early education seems to have been rather meager, and in later life he attempted to pose as an entirely original thinker, completely independent of those who had gone before him. It is said that his career as a philosopher commenced at the age of fourteen when his tutor in literature could not explain to him the meaning of chaos which was mentioned by Hesiod. He first taught in various schools in Asia Minor. About 306 B.C. he founded a school of his own at Athens. As was customary in Greece, the students met in the gardens of the master. Epicurus possessed a charming personality and his students were completely devoted to him and to the spreading of his philosophy. He seems to have exercised not only an intellectual but also a moral influence over his disciples. One of his maxims was: "Do all things as if Epicurus were looking on." (Seneca, Ep. 25, 5th edition, Haase (1853), iii, p. 59.) He taught in Athens for 36 years. Of his numerous writings only fragments have been preserved. After a painful illness, which he is said to have borne with great fortitude, he died in the year 270 B.C.[1]

A. The concept of philosophy. According to Epicurus, philosophy is an activity which leads us to happiness by speculation.[2] His philosophy, therefore, is essentially a theory of

[1] For the sources for the life of Epicurus see Usener, *Epicurea*.

[2] Sext. Empir. adv. Math. (Adv. Ethicos), XI, 169. Ἐπίκουρος μὲν ἔλεγει τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐνέργειαν εἶναι λόγοις καὶ διαλογισμοῖς τὸν εὐδαίμονα βίον περιποιοῦσαν.

living and therefore primarily a system of ethics. Though utilitarian in character, it preserves nevertheless the ancient concept that philosophy is but an aspect of religion that guides man through the difficult and dangerous channels of life. Of all studies it is the most important, and no time is unpropitious to commence it.

"Let no one delay to study philosophy while he is young, and when he is old let him not become weary of the study; for no man can ever find the time unsuitable or too late to study the health of his soul. And he who asserts either that it is not yet time to philosophize, or that the hour is past, is like a man who should say that the time has not yet come to be happy, or that it is too late." [1]

B. The sources of Hedonism. There are two considerations that we may look upon as preludes to the Epicurean ethics:

1. God is a being incorruptible and happy. This idea of God is the model for the life of man, and affords a rational justification for the optimistic striving after pleasure as the end of life.

2. Death is not to be feared. By an unhesitating assent to this principle we are freed from a source of constant uneasiness.

But why, we may ask, is death not to be feared?

(a) Because all good and evil are in sensation, and since death is only the privation of sensation, it can neither be pleasant or unpleasant, desirable or undesirable.

(b) "For it is very absurd that that which does not distress a man when it is present should afflict him when only expected. Therefore, the most formidable of all evils, death, is nothing to us, since when we exist, death is not present to us; and when death is present, then we have no existence." [2]

[1] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers.* Translation by Charles D. Yonge, London, 1853, Book X, § xxvii, p. 468.
[2] *L. c.*, p. 469.

C. The end of life. Turning then our gaze to the present life there is nothing left for us to do but live happily. Happiness, therefore, is the end of all. At first sight we might think that there is no difference between Epicurus and Aristotle.[1] But when we analyze his concept of living happily we find that it consists merely in

1. Health of body.
2. Freedom from disquietude of mind.

In general, therefore, we might say that happiness consists in freedom from disquietude of mind—whether bodily or spiritual—or more simply: happiness is peace. Now the cause of peace is pleasure. We need pleasure to produce peace, and when it is produced our need for pleasure ceases.

"For then we have need of pleasure when we grieve, because pleasure is not present; but when we do not grieve, then we have no need of pleasure; and on this account, we affirm, that pleasure is the beginning and the end of living happily." [2]

From this doctrine it follows that we are to seek the simpler pleasures. They will always be at hand, whereas, the more expensive will not. By desiring the simpler pleasures we attain to independence, for that which we desire is always within our power. And to be always able to get what we want is to be independent of all vicissitudes. The pleasures of debauchery lead to disquietude. Therefore they are to be rejected.

D. The doctrine of freedom. It is rather interesting to note that in its beginnings Hedonism was combined with the doctrine of the freedom of the will. Epicurus insists upon the fact that a man's happiness is in his own power and that therefore he is not ruled by the laws of nature, but his will is free. "Freedom," said Epicurus, "constitutes, in our case, a responsibility which makes us encounter blame and praise." [3] Prudence, which teaches us how to make use of our freedom in the choice of a pleasant life, is the greatest of virtues.

[1] Cf. *Infra*, p. 95 ff. [2] Diogenes Laertius, *l. c.*, p. 470. [3] *L. c.*, xxvii, p. 472.

E. The origin of positive law. In the discussion about the source of obligation of positive law, Epicurus held the idea, later adopted by Hobbes,[1] that the obligation of social enactments depends for its binding force upon a previous covenant by which individuals have limited their freedom for the sake of mutual interests.

From this it follows that "Injustice is not intrinsically bad; it has this character only because there is joined with it a fear of not escaping those who are appointed to punish actions marked with that character." [2]

The school of Epicurus inherited the master's gardens and for a long time these continued to be the meeting place of his followers. About the middle of the second century we hear of Epicureanism in Rome. Tenacious of life the school is said to have been still in existence as late as the fourth century after Christ.

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[1] One cannot help but surmise that Hobbes in the course of his classical studies actually read and took from Epicurus the idea of the Social Contract, cf. *infra*, p. 18.

[2] Diogenes Laertius, *l. c.*, lxxxi, 36. This is one of the maxims of Epicurus, who taught by giving brief statements of the points of his doctrines to his disciples, which they were to commit to memory.

CHAPTER II

The Revival of Utilitarianism

8. Thomas Hobbes. During the Patristic period and the middle ages Utilitarianism was lost sight of in the splendor that surrounded the dominating concepts of Augustinian and Scholastic thought. Nor is it strange that those living in an age in which the minds of men were turned to the Eternal Lawgiver, should not look for the source of moral obligation in the mere pleasure of obedience. When the Epicurean school died out Utilitarianism passed away as a living system of ethics. Nor did it flourish again until it was revived in modern times by the English philosophers.

Before the English revival of Utilitarianism something kindred to it appeared in the political philosophy of *Nicolo Machiavelli* (1469–1527).[1] Certainly his system of morality did not belong to that which recognizes an absolute and eternal distinction between right and wrong. He attempts to justify the principles upon which men and nations so often act in disregard of the most elementary concepts of right and wrong. "So great," he says,[2] "is the difference between the way one actually does live and the way he ought to live, that he who leaves off doing what he does do for what he ought to do may look rather for his own destruction, than hope for salvation. Therefore, he who could be perfect in all things is but the prey of the wicked. Whence it is necessary for a prince who wishes to hold

[1] Janet in his *Histoire de la philosophie morale et politique* devotes considerable attention to Machiavelli. Cf. also, Lutoslawski, W. *Erhaltung und Untergang der Staatsverfassungen nach Plato, Aristoteles und Machiavelli*, Breslau, 1888, pp. viii + 140.

[2] *Il Principe*, Cap. XV, Firenze, 1532, p. 24 left.

his own to learn how not to be good and to make use of virtue or vice according to necessity."

What holds primarily of the prince, holds by extension to every other man within the limits of his own petty kingdom.

The real source of this view is the attempt to elevate the state to a position of absolute supremacy and to subject and sacrifice its individuals to the aggrandizement of those in power. The true order of things is reversed, for in reality the individual does not exist for the sake of the state, but the state for the welfare of the individual. However great the interest aroused by this startling attempt to justify immorality, the philosophic influence of Machiavelli was not great.

The man chiefly responsible for the revival of the ancient Utilitarianism was Hobbes, the first of the great English Moralists.[1]

Thomas Hobbes was born on Good Friday, April 5, 1588, of simple parents who died while he was still young. He was sent to Oxford by his uncle, where he manifested but little interest in the prescribed studies of the day. He took his bachelor's degree at the age of twenty. In the same year he became tutor to Wm. Cavendish, Baron Hardwick, and traveled with him on the Continent. His connection with this family afforded him leisure for study and he devoted himself energetically to the mastery of Greek and Latin. He was a friend of Bacon and is said to have been employed by him to translate some of his works into Latin. Though an Oxford graduate he was to a large extent a self-educated man. His classical studies were carried on in the ease of his life with Cavendish. On his master's death in 1628 the change of circumstances which it occasioned brought with it a re-orientation of his mental life. He became more interested in philosophy and about this period, for the first time in his existence, opened a work on mathematics—the elements of Euclid. His interest

[1] Epicureanism was revived in France about this time by Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655). *Disquisitio Metaphysica*, 1642. *De vita, moribus et doctrina Epicuri*, 1647. *Syntagma philosophiae Epicuri*, 1649. Gassendi was a Canon at Dijon in France, and attempted to harmonize Epicureanism and Christianity. Cf. MARTIN, *Hist. de. la vie et les ecrits de P. Gassendi*, Paris, 1854. BRETT, G. S., *The Philosophy of Gassendi*, London, 1908, pp. xlv + 310.

in science was aroused about the same time and in 1636 he visited Galileo in Florence. After again traveling on the Continent and studying mathematics and natural science at Paris, he returned to England in 1637 with the resolve to construct a universal system of philosophy. In 1640 he wrote *De corpore politico: or, the elements of law, moral and politic*, published ten years later as two separate works. In 1642 his *Elementorum philosophiae sectio tertia De Cive* (2d Ed. Elementa philosophica. Houst. 1647) appeared at Paris, and the *Leviathan, or the Matter, Form and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil*, London, 1651. The *Elementorum philosophiae sectio prima: De Corpore* appeared at London, 1655. The *Elementorium philosophiae sectio secunda De Homine* was published at London in 1658. His last years were spent in troubled times, but devoted entirely to philosophy. He wrote and planned to the very end. Smitten by paralysis he died December 4, 1679.[1]

A. The Psychological basis of ethics. According to Hobbes ethics is a science which arises from a knowledge of the passions of men.[2] Its principles are dependent upon the nature of man and are, therefore, to be derived from a study of man himself, and not from any extraneous considerations.

B. The concept of good and evil. The nature of good and evil is to be explained solely from a study of the emotions with which human goodness and evil are concerned. Looking, therefore, at our emotions we find that by them we (1) turn to an object, (2) turn away from an object, or finally (3) neither turn to or away from an object. The result of the first is desire, of the second aversion, of the third contempt. Desire and aversion have to do with good and evil. "But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth *good*, and the object of his hate and aversion *evil;* and of

[1] The chief sources for the life of Hobbes are given in *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica quae Latine scripsit.* Edited by Molesworth. Vol. I, pp. i—xcix. For a full enumeration, cf. TONNIES, *Thomas Hobbes*, Leipzig, 1912, p. xiii.

[2] Cf. his *Classification of the Sciences*, Leviathan, I, ix, edited by Molesworth, London, 1839, p. 73.

his contempt, *vile* and *inconsiderable*. For these words of good, evil, and contemptible are ever used with relation to the person that useth them; there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil, to be taken from the nature of objects themselves." [1]

If we ask for the evidence of the relativity of good and evil, the answer comes: "Because the constitution of a man's body is in continual mutation it is impossible that all the same things should always cause in him the same appetite and aversions; much less can all men consent in the desire of almost any one and the same object." [2]

Hobbes therefore makes the standard of good entirely subjective. There is no end for me but my own pleasure, consequently nothing but my pleasure is to be considered in choosing the objects of desire. Good and evil, therefore, must be purely relative. This centralization of morality in the desire of the individual earned for Hobbes's Ethics the title of the *Selfish System.*

C. The limitation of Egoism by the social compact. The desires of the individual must, however, be limited. Originally it was not so. For, owing to competition, mistrust of one another and the desire for glory, all men were originally in a state of war; the war of every man against every man. It was found, however, that this state instead of leading to the welfare of the individual ruined it. Therefore men banded together and by a mutual compact limited the rights of the individual and vested them in the state which was formed by this mutual compact. Consequently, in all that concerns common action and common opinion, the individual must submit absolutely to the power of the Sovereign. His laws cannot be unjust, for there is no standard by which they can be so declared. The religion of the people must be that of the Sovereign, and it is wrong for a man to profess

[1] Hobbes, *op. c.*, I, vi, p. 41. [2] *L. c.*, pp. 40–41.

any religious belief other than that which is established by civil authority. For in all that concerns common action the rights of the individual have been merged in those of the state.

9. Locke. John Locke (1632–1704) is deserving of mention in this place as one who helps to fill in the history of Utilitarianism between Hobbes and Bentham. His name is not so great in moral philosophy as it is in epistemology or he could scarcely be passed by with so brief a notice. In him we find Utilitarianism combined with a recognition of things that are absolutely lawful and duties that cannot be laid aside. His ethics is an attempt to harmonize absolute and conditional morality.

With him, as with Hobbes, good and evil are identical with pleasure and pain. The evidence for this lies simply in the fact that "What has an aptness to produce pleasure in us is that we call 'good,' and what is apt to produce pain in us we call 'evil,' for no other reason but for its aptness to produce pleasure and pain in us, wherein consists our happiness and misery." [1]

Nevertheless, we cannot pursue our personal pleasure blindly. We must obey law (1) the divine law; (2) the civil law; (3) the law of public opinion. If one asks, "Why must I obey these laws?" the answer is, because of the rewards and punishments attached to them. The recognition of duty, however, is only apparent, for in the last analysis there is no duty except the seeking of one's own personal welfare in the choice of pleasures and in the avoidance of penalties attached to the infringement of the law.

[1] *Essay on Human Understanding*, II, xxi, 42.

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CHAPTER III

Altruism as Exemplified by Bentham and Mill

In Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer we meet with three men in whose minds Utilitarianism passed through a rapid course of development. Bentham had so far improved upon the "Selfish System" of Hobbes that the greatest happiness of the greatest number became the ethical ideal.[1] Mill added to the concept of the quantity of pleasures the idea of their quality, and Spencer developed Utilitarianism in the light of Evolution.

10. Bentham. Though Bentham popularized the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number he was not by any means its originator. Whewell has pointed out that Bentham's thoughts on the subject were crystallized, to say the least, by reading Priestley.

"Dr. Priestley published his *Essay on Government* in 1768. He there introduced in italics, as the only reasonable and proper object of government, *the greatest happiness of the greatest number*. Mr. Bentham fell in with this work at "a little circulating library belonging to a little coffee-house" close to Queen's College. By this expression of Priestley, Bentham conceived that his own principles on the subject of morality, public and private, were determined." [2]

Bentham was more of a political reformer than a philosopher.

[1] Francis Hutcheson (1698–1746) had previously expressed the idea that "virtue is in compound ratio of the quantity of good, and number of enjoyers." *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treatise II, § iii, 8, 5th edition, London, 1753, p. 184.

[2] Wm. Whewell, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy in England*, London, 1852. Lect. XIII, p. 190. New edition, 1862, p. 205. Bentham himself gave this credit to Priestley. *Deontology: History of Greatest Happiness Principle*, works edited by Bowring, Vol. I, p. 298.

The simplicity and clarity of Utilitarianism as formulated by him made it possible for what was at the outset a philosophy to develop into the platform of a political party.

Jeremy Bentham was born in London, February 15, 1748. As a child he was weak, but of precocious mental ability. His disposition was shy, sensitive and retiring—the very contrary of what his writings would lead us to expect. He took his A.B. at Oxford in 1763, returning, however, in December to hear the lectures of Blackstone. When these lectures were afterwards published as the famous Commentaries they called forth a bitter criticism from Bentham, who thought he had detected a fallacy in Blackstone respecting natural rights. This criticism was embodied in *The Fragment on Government*, published anonymously in 1776. In *The Fragment* Bentham sought to replace natural law by the principle of utility. The work called forth much criticism and comment and was attributed to various authors. Lord Shelbourne sought out the author of *The Fragment* in 1781 and his patronage was Bentham's stepping stone to influence and fame. He gathered about him a number of devoted disciples who undertook the laborious task of putting together their master's notes in book form. His philosophy gave the basis for the arguments of political reformers in England, France, Russia, Spain. The greatest happiness of the greatest number could certainly serve as the watchword of philanthropy no matter what objections one might raise to it as the most fundamental principle of morality. Bentham never married, his one offer of marriage at the age of 57 being rejected by Miss Fox, the niece of Lady Shelbourne. He died June 6, 1832. It is said of him that though he lived to be an old man he always remained a child.[1]

A. Bentham's general attitude. Bentham approached the problem of morality from the standpoint of one who would reform the abuses of the law. He himself was a lawyer, but was too shy and retiring to succeed; too honest and sympathetic to make use of petty means of aggrandizement. The principle

[1] The sources for the life of Bentham are to be found in Vols. X and XI of Bowring's edition of his works, Edinburgh, 1842–1843.

of the greatest happiness of the greatest number dominated his entire thought and activity. This dominance was so complete that everything was sacrificed to build up a logically consistent scheme of ethical theory and legislation by which the one great end of his life would be attained.

B. The standard of right and wrong. Bentham's concept of happiness was expressed by the word *pleasure;* its opposite by *pain.* These he described as the supreme masters of mankind. "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure.* It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and law." [1]

C. The principle of utility. Bentham defines the principle of utility as "that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question." [2]

The word party must not be understood merely in the sense of an individual, but as a general term which covers either an individual or a community.

"By utility is meant that property in any object whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness,

[1] *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Oxford, 1876, Ch. i, § i, pp. 1–2.
[2] *Op. c.*, Ch. i, § 2, p. 2.

(all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or, (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community; if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual." [1]

He points out that it must not be supposed that the community as such has an independent existence and a right to glory and honor and the enjoyment of special advantages. "The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting, as it were, its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what?—the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it." [2]

In the last analysis, therefore, the welfare of the individual must be the standard of right and wrong.

The greatest happiness of the greatest number, Bentham argues, has to do with legal enactments affecting the commonwealth. The welfare of the community, he claims, means nothing more than the happiness of the individuals that compose it. These individuals are not the rulers, but the whole mass of the people, rulers and subjects together.

If, he maintains, it can be shown that any legal act will lead to the greatest happiness of the greatest number of individuals, then it is right; if not, it is wrong. Justice and right, therefore, are purely relative terms and are to be judged by the desires and wishes of all concerned. There is no such thing as a Law of Nature which, as Blackstone maintains, can rise superior to the enactments of a legislative body and declare them to be null and void.[3]

D. Application of the principle of utility. But what is to be done in case difficulties arise? "It is the principle of *utility*,

[1] *Op. c.*, Ch. i, § 3, p. 2.
[2] *Op. c.*, Ch. i, § 4, p. 3.
[3] Cf. *A Fragment on Government*, Oxford, 1891, § xviii, p. 212 ff.

accurately apprehended and steadily applied, that affords the only clue to guide a man through these straits. It is for that, if any, and for that alone, to furnish a decision which neither party shall dare in *theory* to disavow." [1]

But how is this principle of utility to be applied?

"To take an exact account then of the general tendency of any act, by which the interests of a community are affected, proceed as follows: Begin with any one person of those whose interests seems most immediately affected by it: and take an account,

(1) Of the value of each distinguishable *pleasure* which appears to be produced by it in the *first* instance.

(2) Of the value of each *pain* which appears to be produced by it in the *first* instance.

(3) Of the value of each pleasure which appears to be produced by it *after* the first. This constitutes the *fecundity* of the first *pleasure* and the *impurity* of the first *pain*.

(4) Of the value of each *pain* which appears to be produced by it after the first. This constitutes the *fecundity* of the first *pain* and the *impurity* of the first pleasure.

(5) Sum up all the values of all the *pleasures* on the one side, and those of all the pains on the other. The balance, if it be on the side of pleasure, will give the *good* tendency of the act upon the whole, with respect to the interests of that *individual* person; if on the side of pain, the *bad* tendency of it upon the whole.

(6) Take an account of the *number* of persons whose interests appear to be concerned; and repeat the above process with respect to each. *Sum up* the numbers expressive of the degrees of *good* tendency, which the act has, with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is *good* upon the whole: do this again with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is *bad* upon the whole. Take the *balance;* which, if on the side of *pleasure*, will give the general *good tendency* of the act, with respect to the total number or community of individuals concerned; if on

[1] *A Fragment on Government*, § xx, p. 214.

the side of pain, the general *evil tendency* with respect to the same community." [1]

A word of criticism may be said in conclusion. It is seldom that one who is bold enough to construct a theory has also the temerity to formulate rules for putting it in practice. Only the enthusiasm of the reformer could have prevented Bentham from seeing the utter impossibility of any such summation of pleasures constituting a practical guide. How give numerical values to emotional states? Were it possible to graduate our own feelings, how find out the numerical values to give to the other man's pleasures and pains? Were all this possible, we should still be lost in a sea of perplexity as soon as it became necessary to estimate the quantity of pleasure for the members of a vast community and not merely for the few litigants that might have to be considered in a lawsuit.

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11. Mill. The continuation and spread of Bentham's Utilitarianism was due to James Mill (1773–1836)[2] more than to any other one man. In him Utilitarianism found the support of a warm and enthusiastic advocate, but nothing essentially

[1] *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Oxford, 1891, Ch. iv, § 5, pp. 30–31.

[2] Cf. ALEXANDER BAIN. *James Mill. A Biography.* London, 1882, pp. xxxii + 466.

new was added to the doctrine of Bentham. James Mill's son, the famous John Stuart, may be looked upon as the ablest exponent of pure Utilitarianism, and in him the theory attained its highest development.

John Stuart Mill was born in London, May 20, 1806. His early education was completely in the hands of his father, James Mill, famous also as an Utilitarian philosopher. With his father as tutor, he commenced Greek at the age of three—but Latin not until his eighth year. A long list of classics which he had read before the age of twelve is given in his autobiography. His moral training as a youth was obtained from the reading of the ancient classics. His father had no religion, and took care that the son should think as he did. "I am thus," says John Stuart Mill, "one of the very few examples, in this country, of one who has not thrown off religious belief, but never had it."[1] The invitation of Jeremy Bentham's brother in 1820 enabled him to spend a year in France and study science at the University of Montpellier. In 1823 he was appointed Examiner of India Correspondence and became in 1856 the head of the Examiner's office in the India House. His duties in this office gave him leisure to write. His "System of Logic" appeared in 1843; the "Principles of Political Economy" in 1848; the "Essay on Utilitarianism" in 1861; the "Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy" in 1865; the "Autobiography," posthumously, in 1873. In 1851 he married Mrs. Taylor, who died seven years later. Mill died May 8, 1873.[2]

A. The definition of Utilitarianism. Mill thus defines the essence of Utilitarianism: "The creed which accepts, as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and

[1] *Autobiography*, 1873, Ch. ii, p. 43.

[2] The chief sources for the life of Mill are his *Autobiography*, published posthumously, London, 1873, pp. vi + 313. *The Letters of John Stuart Mill*, edited with an introduction by Hugh S. R. Elliot with a note on Mill's private life by Mary Taylor. In speaking of his character Miss Taylor says "A marvel of cruelty! yet how deep and rich must the nature be that can so reign in spite of all!" P. xlvi.

the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure." [1]

It will be noted that this definition does not center morality in the individual, but attempts at least to leave room for the welfare of society as one of the ends of human action.

B. The standard of higher and lower pleasures. When he comes to the further consideration of pleasure as the end of action, he makes the important distinction between the higher and lower pleasures, maintaining that man who is capable of the higher pleasures ought to choose them rather than the most liberal allowance that could be conceived of the merely sensuous enjoyment of a brute. If, then, the quantity alone does not tell us what pleasure to choose there must be some way of knowing that one quality of pleasure is to be preferred to another. This criterion is to be found in the experience of those who have tasted both kinds and pronounce one far superior. Since man, therefore, enjoys both the faculties of reason and of sense, he is in a position to say that his happiness is greater than that of the animal who knows not the enjoyment of understanding. And the noble-minded man, who has experienced the satisfaction and pleasure of an intellectual and virtuous life, is in a position to say that his happiness is greater than that of an ignorant profligate who cannot experience those higher joys that constitute true blessedness.

"From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question, which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final." [2]

[1] *Utilitarianism* (Reprinted from Fraser's Magazine), London, 1863, ch. ii, p. 10.
[2] Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Ch. ii, p. 15.

C. The evidence for Utilitarianism. The evidence in favor of Utilitarianism is a simple appeal to fact. What is that which we desire as an end and to which we refer all other things as means? "The Utilitarian doctrine is, that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end. . . . No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness." [1]

But do we not seem to desire other things besides happiness; for example, virtue? We do, indeed, says Mill, but we desire them not as means to an end, but as integral parts of our own happiness. Virtue is loved for its own sake and not as a means to anything else simply because it is one of the many things that go to make up happiness.

In the last analysis the question is one of fact. "It can only be determined by practiced self-consciousness and self-observation, assisted by observation of others. I believe that these sources of evidence, impartially consulted, will declare that desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon; in strict language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact: that to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences), and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and that to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility." [2]

[1] *Utilitarianism*, Ch. iv, pp. 51 and 52. [2] *Utilitarianism*, Ch. iv, p. 57.

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CHAPTER IV

Utilitarianism and Evolution

12. Herbert Spencer. The ethics of Herbert Spencer is intimately related to and in part dependent upon the work of two great men. One of these men is the philosopher whose ethics we have just considered, the other is Charles Darwin. Mill's essay on Utilitarianism appeared in Fraser's Magazines in 1861. The *Data of Ethics*, being the first part of Spencer's *Principles of Ethics*, was published in 1879. Spencer's moral philosophy modified considerably the concepts of the great Utilitarians without, however, ceasing to be Hedonistic in character. While placing Utilitarianism in a new setting, it made no essential addition to its fundamental concepts. The happiness of the individual, the intrinsic value of virtue, the distinction between the higher and lower pleasures, were ideas that had already been exploited. What was left for Spencer to do was to give these ideas a new life, to attempt to establish them by a new method, to harmonize Egoism and Altruism with each other and with the science of the day. This he did with all the brilliancy of his original genius. In so doing he came into close relationship with Darwin, by whom the theory of Evolution was popularized. His relationship to Darwin, however, is not one of dependence. Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, Spencer's *Essay on the Development Hypothesis* in 1852. Darwin's influence on Spencer was retroactive. He gave popularity to the theory of Evolution, and this popularity reflected back upon Spencer. There is a difference, too, between the concepts of evolution in the two writers. With Dar-

win evolution appears as the product of the forces of nature, but with Spencer it is the supreme force and law of nature.

Herbert Spencer was born in Derby, April 27, 1820. At the age of thirteen he was taken by his father to his uncle Thomas, an Anglican clergyman at Hinton, and a graduate of the University of Cambridge. Most of Spencer's education was received under the tutorship of his uncle. He never went through a university and to a great extent was a self-educated man. His first employment in life was that of a civil engineer. In 1848 he accepted the position of sub-editor of the *Economist*, putting an end to what he termed "the futile part of my life" (*Autobiography*, I, p. 334). Spencer's first book was on Ethics and entitled "Social Statics, or the conditions essential to human happiness specified, and the first of them developed." It appeared in 1851. His interest in ethics reaches further back still. In the preface to the *Data of Ethics* (1879), he said, "written as far back as 1842, my first essay, consisting of letters on *The Proper Sphere of Government*, vaguely indicated what I conceived to be general principles of right and wrong in political conduct; and from that time onwards my ultimate purpose, lying behind all proximate purposes, has been that of finding for the principles of right and wrong in conduct at large, a scientific basis." Between the years of 1848 and 1860 he developed the plan of his monumental synthetic philosophy. The *Principles of Psychology* appeared in 1866. In 1860 he published the prospectus of his Synthetic Philosophy. The first volume of his "First Principles" appeared in 1862. Though interrupted by financial difficulties and ill health, the great work of his life was completed with the publication of the third volume of the *Principles of Sociology* in 1896. Spencer never married. He died in Brighton, December 8, 1903.[1]

A. The idea of conduct. Spencer's theory of morality may be termed biological, so closely is it connected with the scientific concepts of life and evolution. Its first element is the idea of

[1] The main sources for Spencer's life are his *Autobiography* published posthumously in 1904, and DAVID DUNCAN, *The Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer*. This work was published in accordance with provisions laid down in Spencer's will.

conduct. Moral action, it is held, is simply a piece of conduct and can only be understood by comparing the complex conduct of the human being with the simpler manifestations of conduct in lower organisms. In general we see that "conduct is a whole, and, in a sense, it is an organic whole, an aggregate of interdependent actions performed by an organism." [1]

In order to be moral conduct, according to Spencer's theory, this interdependence of actions performed by the organism must be directed to some end. Though interdependent, the actions of an epileptic fit would not constitute a piece of moral conduct. "The definition of conduct which emerges is either acts adjusted to ends, or else the adjustment of acts to ends." [2] The end gives the character to the act and according to the end the action becomes good, bad, or ethically indifferent.

B. The end of moral action. If we ask ourselves what is the end of moral action, the answer comes, to make the totality of life greater. By this totality of life is not meant mere length of days; for a greater totality of life involves also a greater complication of mental processes. This is evidenced by the course of evolution. In an infusorium we meet with but little adjustment of actions to an end. Its motions are random. "The conduct is constituted of actions so little adjusted to ends that life continues only as long as the accidents of the environment are favorable. But when, among aquatic creatures, we observe one which, though still low in type, is much higher than the infusorium—say a rotifer, we can see how, along with larger size, more developed structure, and greater power of combining functions, there goes an advance in conduct. We see how by its whirling cilia it sucks in as food these small animals moving around; how by its prehensile tail it affixes itself to some object; how by withdrawing its outer organs and contracting its body, it preserves itself from this or that injury

[1] *Principles of Ethics*, I, i, p. 5. [2] *L. c.*

from time to time threatened, and how then by better adjusting its own actions it becomes less dependent on the actions going on around, and so preserves itself for a longer period." [1] Still higher up in the scale we have the oyster and the cuttlefish. The oyster may live in its shell for a long period, the cuttlefish soon fall prey to external violence. But in the shorter period of its existence the vital activity of the cuttlefish has been more complicated and extensive. Consequently, it has gotten more out of life. As in the lower organisms, so with man, the end of development is to make the totality of life greater. This totality is to be measured by the product of the length and breadth of one's existence. That the totality of life may be as large as possible, and as full of pleasure as it can be filled, is the final end of human evolution and the goal of man's ambition.

C. Modes of attaining the end. Looking at the modes of adjustment by which the organism attains its end we can distinguish (1) individual adjustment, which tends to increase the totality of life in the individual; (2) racial adjustment, which makes for the preservation of the species, and (3) coöperative adjustment, by which each attains his end without interfering with others. Individual adjustment is not realized in any organism as the sole means by which it attains its end, for everywhere we find some means by which living beings tend to preserve the species. "And in proportion as evolution of the conduct subserving individual life is high, implying organization, there must previously have been a highly-evolved conduct subserving nurture of the young." [2]

"Good" and "bad" are words which Spencer also uses in reference to conduct. He explains them in a very characteristic fashion. Conduct, he maintains, is good or bad according as it is well- or ill-adjusted to its end. Conduct is good from the standpoint of individual adjustment when it is calculated to

[1] *L. c.*, p. 11. [2] *Op. c.*, p. 15.

further the welfare of the individual and preserve him in being; bad if it leads to his misfortune. Conduct is good from the standpoint of racial adjustment when it furthers the welfare of offspring. "A mother is called good who, ministering to all the physical needs of her children, also adjusts her behavior in ways conducive to their mental health; and a bad father is one who either does not provide the necessaries of life for his family, or otherwise acts in a manner injurious to their bodies or minds."[1]

Preëminently, however, conduct is good or bad in relation to coöperative adjustment. "Goodness standing by itself suggests, above all other things, the conduct of one who aids the sick in reacquiring normal vitality, assists the unfortunate to recover the means of maintaining themselves, defends those who are threatened with harm in person, property or reputation, and aids whatever promises to improve the living of his fellows."[2] He who acts in just the opposite manner is looked upon by all men as bad. Goodness, therefore, is necessarily relative to the end that is secured. What is good from one point of view is bad from another. Spencer maintains, furthermore, that there can be no absolute good, for some pain is involved in every effort and therefore in all conduct. But good conduct leads on the whole to a surplus of pleasure, and this surplus of pleasure is the real end of human action.

D. Harmony of Egoism and Altruism. It is clear, therefore, that neither Egoism nor Altruism can alone be true. For a good man must adjust his actions not only for the welfare of others, but also for his own self-preservation. The true ethics is a compromise between Egoism and Altruism. "General happiness is to be reached mainly through the adequate pursuit of their own happiness by individuals; while, reciprocally, the happinesses of individuals are to be achieved in part by their pursuit of general happiness."[3]

[1] *Op. c.*, p. 24. [2] *Op. c.*, p. 24–25. [3] *Op. c.*, Ch. xiii, p. 238.

Spencer's theory of morals partakes of the character of the functional ethics of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and of the Hedonism of Epicurus and the Utilitarians. Good conduct, says Spencer, is the performance of a function so as to attain the end in view. In this he is one with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. But the real end in view is always pleasure—a greater quantity of pleasure which is measured by length of days, and a higher quality of pleasure which is measured by the complexity of vital activities. Herein he does but develop the Hedonistic concepts that had been evolving from the days of Epicurus to his own.

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13. Henry Sidgwick. We cannot pass from this consideration of Utilitarianism without at least mentioning one who by many is looked upon as the greatest of all Utilitarians and whose moral philosophy is an attempt to bridge the chasm between conditionate and absolute morality.

In the ethics of Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900) we have a still further development of Utilitarianism, but it is a growth in which the flower is already past its bloom. His great work, *The Methods of Ethics*, represents the struggles of his own mind for a standard of morality. "My first adhesion," he writes, "to a definite ethical system was to the Utilitarianism of Mill; I found in this relief from the apparently external and arbitrary pressure of moral rules which I had been educated to obey, and which presented themselves to me as to some extent doubtful and confused; and sometimes, even when clear, as merely dogmatic, unreasoned and incoherent." [1]

The analysis of Mill, however, showed him that the basis of altruistic Utilitarianism was in the last resort one's own personal pleasure. His struggle with Egoism and his rejection of it is given in the second book of *The Methods of Ethics*.

From Egoism he turned to Intuitionalism, the philosophy of morals which assumes that we have the power of seeing clearly what actions are in themselves clear and reasonable. He felt that the obligations of morality could not be explained on the Egoistic basis, and that there was right and wrong when Egoism could not say why. But in Intuitionalism he found the same difficulty. For though the current maxims of our moral sense are sufficient for practical guidance they lack the requisite characteristics of scientific axioms. This second stage of his ethical development is given in the third book of his *Methods of Ethics*. In the fourth book we have his attempt to synthesize absolute and conditionate morality, or, as he himself expressed this stage of his development, "I was then a Utilitarian again, but on an Intuitional basis." [2] This synthesis arose by giving to the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill the basis of a "fundamental intuition" and by showing that the principles of the "moral sense" had their justification in the general welfare.

The whole ethical system bears the impress of a mind that

[1] *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th ed., 1907, p. xv. [2] *Op. c.*, p. xx.

struggled with difficulties that it could not solve. Sidgwick seems not to have grasped the importance of the Aristotelian distinction between pleasure and happiness, and not to have fully appreciated the Thomistic ethics in which the final end of human acts is happiness, and the criterion, by which we distinguish between right and wrong, is the dignity of human nature.[1] He was striving towards a higher ethics, and a goal which unfortunately he never attained.

[1] Cf. *The Analysis of Thomistic Ethics*, below, p. 105 ff.

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CHAPTER V

The Ethics of Nature and Custom

14. Rousseau. In Jean Jacques Rousseau we meet with the fundamental principle of Stoic morality outside of its metaphysical setting. With the Stoics, as we shall see, Nature is a force that works in man as well as in the world outside of him, inclining everything to its true good. With Rousseau the all-pervading force of nature is lost sight of, and the "state of nature" is pointed out as one in which instinct leads, as with the Stoics, to the choice of what is good and the rejection of what is harmful. But we are left to conjecture for ourselves what instinct is, and how it operates. He himself seemed to recognize his relationship to Stoic thought when he took from Seneca the motto of his Émile: "*Sanabilibus ægrotamus malis; ipsaque nos in rectum genitos natura, si emendari velimus, juvat.*" (*De Ira*, lib. ii, cap. 13.)[1]

Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva, June 28, 1712. His father took in hand his early education and accomplished the task by reading novels and historical works to the son. This course of education was interrupted by the banishment of the father from Geneva. He went to Bossey, "to board with the Protestant minister, Lambercier, in order to learn, together with Latin, all the sorry trash which is included under the name of education." (*Confessions* Book I, p. 9.) Returning to Geneva, he attempted to study law, but without success. He was then apprenticed to an engraver, owing to whose brutality he fled in 1728. For some years after this the life of Rousseau was that of a vagabond. He obtained

[1] This quotation appeared in the edition of Amsterdam, 1762, that of Frankfort, 1762, and in a third edition, also 1762, "*Selon la copie de Paris*" (The Hague).

employment as a valet from time to time but was dismissed for petty theft or unruly conduct. About the age of sixteen he outwardly embraced Catholicism and through the influence of a certain Madame de Warens went to study for the priesthood, but was found wanting. He made the very most of a scant knowledge of music to give instruction, whereas he was utterly incapable. He invented a system of musical notation which ended in a fiasco. Through the instrumentality of friends, made solely by the peculiar charm of his personality, he had many opportunities for advancement, but threw them all away. Fame came to him suddenly in 1749, by his winning the prize offered by the academy of Dijon for the best essay on: "Whether the progress of the arts and sciences has contributed more to the deterioration or improvement of morals?" His most important work, *Emile*, appeared in 1762 and caused such commotion that Rousseau was obliged to leave France. He accepted eventually the invitation of Hume to go to England, where he arrived in 1766. In England he wrote the first six books of his *Confessions*, which he completed on his return to the Continent and read with great solemnity to his friends. The chief interest of his latter days was botany. He died suddenly in 1778, but whether he committed suicide or died of apoplexy has never been determined. That his character was psychopathic there can be no doubt. His philosophy was the expression of his yearnings rather than the dictation of reason.[1]

A. The development of social customs. According to Rousseau the distinction between right and wrong actions arises from the present customs of society. Originally man existed in a very different state, the primitive state of nature. He was one among the many species of animals that inhabited the woods and mountains, the shores of rivers and lakes. If he was driven from one tree he went to another. Ground and the means of subsistence were open to all, and no one could call anything his own. "It is evident at once that men in this state, having between them no kind of moral relation nor any known duties,

[1] The "Confessions" are the main source for the life of Rousseau. Besides this work may be mentioned DUSAULX, *De mes rapports avec J. J. Rousseau*, 1798; BARRUEL-BEAUVERT, *Vie de J. J. Rousseau*, 1789.

could not be either good or bad and had neither virtues nor vices." [1] There is therefore, concludes Rousseau, no such thing as a natural law, the source whence all legislation derives its authority. All law whatsoever is the artificial product of human customs. "Hobbes saw very well the fault of all modern definitions of natural law; but the conclusion that he draws from his own definition shows that he took it in a sense which in its turn too is false." [2] The natural condition of man is not one of warfare, but of peace. Pity moderates selfishness. Do as you would be done by is the fundamental maxim of natural goodness, obedience to which is an instinct in the state of nature. Originally there was scarcely any more intercourse between man and man than between man and beast. Still when one man did meet another, he recognized in him a certain likeness to himself and other beings whom he had met before. This led to the conclusion that those who look like me, think and feel like me and may have common interests with me. So from time to time men banded together, rendered each other mutual service, and thus gradually came to perceive the moral force of contracts.

The making of the first hut gave rise to the family, and with the family came the duties and moral obligations that it implies. From the family came the tribe. When men came to live together one man was compared with another. One was praised, another blamed. So arose jealousy, passion, crime and the infringement of liberty, leading to retribution and punishment. Thus a moral law commenced to appear before the introduction of positive law. [3]

The development of agriculture led to the apportionment of the land and the first rights of property. The invention of money, the sign of wealth, led to avarice and robbery. Little by little a general state of anarchy arose in primitive society.

[1] *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes. Oeuvres complètes de J. J. Rousseau mises dans un nouvel ordre*, par V. D. Musset-Pathay, Vol. I, Paris, 1823, p. 255.
[2] *Op. c.*, p. 256.
[3] *Op. c.*, p. 281.

Then men came together and made a mutual contract to found a society, and invest in the State the supreme right of protecting the individual, defending the community, and maintaining an abiding peace.[1]

B. The feeling of right and wrong. When we approach the problem of morality from within we arrive at essentially the same concept. To do right is to act in accordance with instinct which prompts us to that which is in accordance with nature. "I have only myself to consult about what I want to do. All that which I feel to be good, is good. All that which I feel to be wrong, is wrong. The best of all casuists is conscience. . . . It is the true guide of man. It is to the soul what instinct is to the body. He who follows it obeys nature and fears not to be misled." [2]

One would misunderstand Rousseau if he interpreted the words, "All that which I feel to be good, is good," as meaning merely that even if one is mistaken in his moral judgment, he does not sin provided that he is sincerely and honestly in the wrong. Conscience, with Rousseau, is not an intellectual judgment. Reason, he believes, may deceive, but conscience never. Conscience is also different from the promptings of our emotional nature. "Conscience is the voice of the soul, emotion the voice of the body." [3] Conscience, therefore, is distinct from any of the ordinarily recognized acts of our mental life. It is something *sui generis*, and in the guidance of man it takes the place of instinct which leads animals with certainty to their goal.

In the education of man we must recognize the guidance of instinct and conscience. If we do not thwart nature all will come out well. To educate we simply have to see that nothing is done contrary to nature, which leads inevitably to the true destiny and perfection of man.

[1] Cf. *op. c.*, p. 292.
[2] *Emile*, Livre IV, *Profession de foi du vicaire Savoyard. Oeuvres complètes de J. J. Rousseau*, ed. by V. D. Musset-Pathay, Vol. IV, p. 58.
[3] *L. c.*

C. The concept of law. With Rousseau, therefore, there is no such thing as eternal or natural law. For the time was when man existed and moral relations had not begun to be. The ordinary laws of society are but artificial products, and therefore have no element in them that binds in conscience. Right and wrong are dictated to us by this mysterious power within us which, if we follow, will lead us to the ideal of nature. The reason why we should conform to the ideal of nature must ultimately be that therein our true happiness is to be found.

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PART II

THE ETHICS OF ABSOLUTE MORALITY

Introduction

Hitherto we have followed, in our presentations of the types of ethical theory, an order which was at the same time logical and almost perfectly historical. Except in the case of Rousseau it was possible to arrange the typical exponents of conditionate morality logically in a perfectly historical order.

This could scarcely be done with the systems of absolute morality. There is a great variety of such theories, and they are best held in mind by adhering to a purely logical classification. The ground for distinction between these systems lies in the various ways in which, conceivably, one might distinguish the difference between right and wrong actions.

Perhaps none of the commonly recognized faculties of the mind is capable of perceiving that an act is right or wrong, and therefore we must postulate a special *moral sense.* This theory, originating in Shaftesbury, was crystallized and further developed by Hutcheson.

If right and wrong are perceived by some one of the commonly recognized faculties, it might either be through the affective or by the representative faculties. In the *ethics of sympathy* maintained by Adam Smith we have a type of the former class. Since Smith was a pupil of Hutcheson, the consideration of his philosophy follows naturally upon that of his master. In the Stoic *ethics of instinct* another example of this class is afforded.

If the perception of right and wrong is to be ascribed to our

representative powers, it might take place immediately by *intuition*, as was maintained by Cudworth, or the distinction might be made for the most part mediately by reason. To this class belongs the ethics of Kant, who by an analysis of the concept of duty and speculations built thereon developed his *autonomous system of ethics*. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, by reasoning on the manifold relations of man, developed what may be termed *functional ethics*.

CHAPTER I

The Ethics of the Moral Sense

15. Shaftesbury. Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, in a very brief literary career, developed a system of morality which was of far-reaching influence. His works were translated into French and German soon after their appearance. By no personal contact but merely by the power of his printed words he inspired Hutcheson with the spirit of his philosophy, and through Hutcheson or directly by his works he had no little influence on Hume. Though he was not a Utilitarian, from him, as from a fountain, flowed forth a stream of thought which was later to water the hitherto arid ground of English Hedonism, and bring into bloom the flower of Altruism.

His mastery of Greek and Latin opened to him the books of the ancients, and he was inspired by the Grecian ideal of beauty and loveliness. The concept of the beauty and harmony in the great world of nature, and in the little, but none the less marvelous, world of the moral life of man, was the dominant note of his ethics. This æstheticism was only intensified by the harshness of the Puritan iconoclasm that he saw about him.

The Egoism of Hobbes which derived morality from the *bellum omnium contra omnes* was utterly irreconcilable with the beauty and harmony he saw in all things. Against this "selfish" system he opposed the morality of benevolence.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in London, February 26, 1671. His early education was superintended by the philosopher, John Locke, family physician to the second Earl of Shaftesbury. For the preceptor of his youth, he ever after-

wards entertained a great respect, even though later he wrote of him, "It was Mr. Locke that struck at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world, and made the very ideas of these (which are the same as those of God) unnatural and without foundation in our minds." [1]

Under Locke's supervision the actual instruction was given by a Mrs. Birch, "so thoroughly versed in the Greek and Latin tongues that she could speak either of them with the greatest fluency." [2]

Shaftesbury entered college at Winchester in 1683. In 1686 he commenced his continental travels. In 1695 he was elected to Parliament, but retired owing to ill health in 1698 and went to Holland. While in Holland an imperfect edition of his *Enquiry after Virtue* was printed without his permission by John Toland. In 1709 he married Miss Jane Ewer. His *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, which was a collection of his essays, appeared in 1711. In this year also he set out for Naples, where he died February 15, 1713. With him moral philosophy was more than a theory, for he lived and put in practice the ethics of benevolence.[3]

A. Shaftesbury not a Utilitarian. In considering the moral philosophy of Shaftesbury one might at first think—lo, we have here an Altruist born out of due time. He is a Utilitarian opposed indeed to Egoism but not to the later forms of Utilitarianism as expressed by Bentham and Mill. But no. The morality of Utilitarianism is essentially conditionate, that of Shaftesbury is absolute. Right and wrong are even more eternal than the will of God. "For whoever thinks there is a God, and pretends formally to believe that he is just and good, must suppose that there is independently such a thing as jus-

[1] *Several letters written by a noble lord to a young man at the University*, London, 1716, Letter viii, p. 39.

[2] *Life*, by his son, edited by Rand, p. xix.

[3] The main sources for the life of Shaftesbury are to be found in: *The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, edited by Benjamin Rand, London, 1900. Besides, we have *Original Letters of Locke; Algernon Sidney and Anthony, Lord Shaftesbury*, edited by T. Forster, London, 1830. A second edition with added letters appeared in 1847—*Letters from the . . . Earl of Shaftesbury to Robert Molesworth . . . with a large Introduction by the Editor.* Z. Z. [Toland], London, 1721.

tice and injustice, truth and falsehood, right and wrong, according to which he pronounces that God is just, righteous, and true." [1]

B. The concept of virtue. Shaftesbury's concept of virtue is intimately bound up with a pronounced optimism. Nothing whatsoever can be called good or bad without considering its relations. Suppose we should be told of a solitary creature, "one who had neither mate nor fellow of any kind, nothing of his own likeness, towards which he stood well affected or inclined, nor anything without or beyond himself for which he had the least passion or concern." [2] Suppose, too, that we were told that this creature "had a great relish of life, and was in nothing wanting to his own good, we might acknowledge, perhaps, that the creature was no monster, nor absurdly constituted as to himself. But we should hardly, after all, be induced to say of him that he was a good creature." [3]

Thus only, holds Shaftesbury, when a creature is part of a system, and has the characteristics which enable him to take his part in the harmony of that system, can he be called good. The fly is good from the viewpoint of the spider. One animal ministers to another in the universal order of things, and therefore all is good.

"In a creature capable of forming general notions of things, not only the outward beings which offer themselves to the senses are the objects of affection, but the very actions themselves, and the affections of pity, kindness, gratitude, and their contraries, being brought into the mind by reflection, become objects." [4]

It is in the regulation of these inner objects that true virtue consists. It is "a certain just disposition or proportionable

[1] *Characteristics*, Treatise IV. *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, III, i, 2. Ed. of 1900, p. 264.
[2] *Inquiry*, Book I, Part ii, § 1, p. 244.
[3] *L. c.*
[4] *Inquiry*, Book I, Part ii, § 3, p. 251.

affection of a rational creature towards the objects of right and wrong." [1]

C. The function of man. The function of man is to be virtuous or to bring about a harmony of his inner self by the regulation of his passions. Shaftesbury thus classifies the passions: "The affections or passions which must influence and govern the animal are either:

"1. The natural affections, which lead to the good of the public;

"2. Or, the self affections, which lead to the good of the private;

"3. Or, such as are neither of these, nor tending either to any good of the public or private, but contrariwise; and which may, therefore, be justly styled unnatural affections." [2]

Shaftesbury attempts to show [3] (1) that he who has the natural affections, those namely which concern the public weal, has also the chief means and power of self-enjoyment and that he who lacks them is miserable.

(2) He also argues [4] "that to have the private or self-affections too strong, or beyond their degree of subordinacy to the kindly and natural, is also miserable," and [5] (3) "to have the unnatural affections (viz., such as are neither founded on the interest of the kind or public, nor of the private person or creature himself) is to be miserable in the highest degree."

In the working out of this harmony, in freedom from the unnatural passions, in possessing the self-affections, but in due moderation, in the cultivation of the natural affections, argues Shaftesbury, lies the end of man. This end does not soar above man, but is centered in the world in which he lives and moves and has his being. "To love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as

[1] *Inquiry*, Book I, Part iii, § 1, p. 258. [2] *Inquiry*, Book II, Part i, § 3, p. 286.
[3] *Inquiry*, Book II, Part ii, § 1, p. 293 ff. [4] *L. c.*, § 2, p. 317 ff. [5] *L. c.*, § 3, p. 330 ff.

lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine." [1]

D. The perception of right and wrong. Right and wrong are perceived by a special faculty. Shaftesbury does not always call this faculty by the same name. Nor did he subject the matter to a careful psychological analysis. This was left for Hutcheson to accomplish. Comparing the perception of moral beauty to other sensible qualities, he asks, "Are there senses by which all those other graces and perfections are perceived, and none by which this higher perfection and grace is comprehended?" [2] The moral sense sits in judgment upon our affections. "In these vagrant characters or pictures of manners, which the mind of necessity figures to itself and carries still about with it, the heart cannot possibly remain neutral, but constantly takes part one way or other. However false or corrupt it be within itself, it finds the difference, as to beauty and comeliness, between one heart and another, one turn of affection, one behavior, one sentiment and another; and accordingly, in all disinterested cases, must approve in some measure of what is natural and honest, and disapprove what is dishonest and corrupt." [3]

E. The beauty of morality. Shaftesbury agreed with Socrates in the identification of the beautiful and the good, but their ideas of the beauty of goodness were somewhat different. With Socrates what was useful was both good and beautiful. With Shaftesbury the beauty of goodness was the beauty of universal friendship.

"Hear, then!" said Theocles. "For though I pretend not to tell you at once the nature of this which I call good, yet I am content to show you something of it in yourself, which you will

[1] *Characteristics*, Vol. I, Treatise I, *Enthusiasm*, § 4, p. 27.
[2] *Characteristics*, Vol. II, *The Moralists*, Part iii, § 2.
[3] *Characteristics*, Vol. I, *Inquiry*, Book I, Part ii, § 3, p. 252.

acknowledge to be naturally more fixed and constant than anything you have hitherto thought on. Tell me, my friend, if ever you were weary of doing good to those you loved? . . . Never did any soul do good, but it came readier to do the same again with more enjoyment. Never was love, or gratitude, or bounty, practiced but with increasing joy, which made the practicer still more in love with the fair act. Answer me, Philocles, you who are such a judge of beauty, and have so good a taste of pleasure, is there anything you admire so fair as friendship? Or anything so charming as generous action? What would it be, therefore, if all life were in reality but one continued friendship, and could be made one such entire act? Here surely would be that fixed and constant good you sought." [1]

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16. Hutcheson. The connecting link between Shaftesbury and Hutcheson was Lord Molesworth, a man who corresponded with Locke and Shaftesbury and was prominent in the Society of Dublin in the second decade of the eighteenth century. He was an ardent admirer of Shaftesbury and formed in Dublin a philosophical club. To this circle was admitted the man to whom more than to any other the further influence of Shaftesbury must be attributed.[2] He supplied to the philosophy of Shaftesbury that which was its greatest need, a psychological basis.

[1] *Characteristics*, Vol. II, *The Moralists*, Part ii, § 1, p. 36.
[2] Cf. here on Scott, *Francis Hutcheson*, p. 25 ff.

Francis Hutcheson was born in Ireland, August 8, 1694. The rudiments of his classical education he received in a "dissenting" school near Saintfield. He matriculated at the University of Glasgow in 1711, where he studied philosophy and theology for six years. About 1720 he opened an academy in Dublin and remained there till he took the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow in 1730. In 1725 he published *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue.* This was followed by his *Essay on the Passions* in 1728. Hutcheson appeared as a defender of Shaftesbury and revived the interest in this philosopher. For a number of years before his death he labored on his great work, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, which did not appear until 1754. He died August 8, 1746.[1]

A. The absolute character of morality. According to Hutcheson in all righteous action there must be something absolutely good. For we do not do good actions because they are pleasant, but because we see in them "a morally good" character. This morally good character is not a perception of the connection of the action with our own welfare, as will be evident upon anyone considering the case of a man to whom the Deity would declare that "he should suddenly be annihilated, but at the instant of his exit it should be left to his choice whether his friend, his children, or his country should be made happy or miserable for the future, when he himself could have no sense of either pleasure or pain from their state. Pray would he be any more indifferent about their state, now that he neither hoped nor feared anything to himself from it, than he was at any prior period of his life?" [2]

Nor does the moral character of an act depend upon laws. Human laws may be called good because of their conformity with the divine, but why are God's laws good? The reason for

[1] The chief sources for the life of Hutcheson are the *Biography* by Wm. Leechman, prefixed to the *System of Moral Philosophy*, 1755, and W. R. Scott's *Francis Hutcheson*, which was a painstaking search for every shred of information concerning him.

[2] *An Inquiry Concerning Moral Good and Evil*, Treatise II of *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Sect. ii, § 5, pp. 147–148, 5th ed., London, 1753.

this is that they tend to the universal happiness of his creatures. The tendency of an act to promote the universal welfare is a character that belongs to it in the very nature of things. "It must then be supposed that there is something in action which is apprehended absolutely good. And this is benevolence, or desire of the public natural happiness of rational agents." [1] Personal happiness is necessarily connected with all good actions, but it is not necessarily thought of when we do them. The function of moral philosophy is to show the truth of this statement by solid reasons.[2]

B. The moral sense. This peculiar character of good actions is taken cognizance of by the *moral sense.* This is "a natural and immediate determination to approve certain affections, and actions consequent upon them, or a natural sense of immediate excellence in them, not referred to any other quality perceivable by our senses or by reasoning." [3] Hutcheson attempted to show that the mind has a number of special senses that he classed under the general heading "Finer Powers of Perception." Some of these were subdivisions of imagination, such as the sense of beauty, harmony, etc.; others, such as *moral sense*, had a distinct position in his classification of mental processes.

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[1] *Op. c.*, Sect. vii, § 5, p. 280.
[2] *Op. c.*, Sect. vii, § 2, p. 224.
[3] *A System of Moral Philosophy*, London, 1755, Vol. I, Book I, Ch. iv, § 4, p. 58.

CHAPTER II

The Ethics of Sympathy

17. Adam Smith. Adam Smith, a pupil of Hutcheson, approached the problem of morality from an exclusively psychological point of view. He wanted to know why it is that our minds approve of some actions as right and disapprove of others as wrong. He answered this question by an appeal to experience, and thought that the key to the situation was to be found in the emotion of sympathy. Morality, therefore, is not a matter of the understanding but of feeling. It is not dictated by an unknown and unanalyzable power of the mind, as Hutcheson thought, but by an emotion common and familiar to us all. The passions of another resound within ourselves. The harmony of his action with the resonance in ourselves causes us to approve of his conduct—to look upon it as righteous—and if we cannot sympathize with his course of action we condemn it as morally wrong.

Adam Smith was born in Scotland, June 5, 1723, a few months after the death of his father. He is said to have been an infirm and sickly child whose love for books was developed by his inability to take part in active amusements. From the grammar school of Kirkaldy, the city of his birth, he went to the University of Glasgow in 1737. Here he listened to the lectures of Francis Hutcheson. He remained at Glasgow till 1740, when he entered Baliol College, Oxford. He studied at Oxford for seven years. In 1748 he took up his residence at Edinburgh, devoting himself to the study of rhetoric and the classics. In 1751 he took the Chair of Logic at Glasgow, being removed in the following year to the Professorship of Moral Philosophy. Some time before 1752 he met and

became intimately acquainted with David Hume. His first work was *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. It appeared in 1759. In 1764, having resigned his position at Glasgow, he traveled for two years on the Continent, meeting many of the great thinkers of the day. Ten years were spent in retirement, at the end of which, in 1776, appeared the work to which his fame is due: *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. He died in July, 1790.[1]

A. The character of Smith's ethics. In Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the psychological point of view is so exclusive, and he is so absorbed in finding out *how* we know the distinction between right and wrong, that the more metaphysical question of *what* makes right and wrong is almost lost sight of. But when he says that the doctrine of Hobbes was "offensive to all sound moralists, as it supposed that there was no natural distinction between right and wrong, that these were mutable and changeable and depended upon the mere arbitrary will of the civil magistrate," [2] we see that he really belongs in the class of those who recognize an absolute morality.

B. How we judge the actions of others. Certain it is, Smith maintained, that we judge others and declare their actions right or wrong, just or unjust. Certain it is, too, that our personal experience is the only means by which we can have the least inkling of another person's feelings and dispositions. If that is the case, then, if we are going to judge his action, we must live it in ourselves. His passions must resound within myself and I must approve or disapprove of their resonance. This I am able to do by means of the fellow feeling of sympathy. In virtue of the emotion of sympathy a very real change of place occurs between me and the sufferer whom I am regarding.

"When we see a stroke aimed and just ready to fall upon the

[1] The main source for the life of Adam Smith is the *Memoir* by DUGALD STEWART, Edinburgh, 1811.

[2] *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, London, 1812 (Vol. I of Dugald Stewart's edition of his works), Part VII, Sect. iii, Ch. 2, p. 565.

leg or arm of another person, we naturally shrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does fall, we feel it in some measure, and are hurt by it as well as the sufferer." [1]

"What are the pangs of a mother when she hears the moanings of her infant that during the agony of disease cannot express what it feels? In her idea of what it suffers, she joins, to its real helplessness, her own consciousness of that helplessness, and her own terrors for the unknown consequences of its disorder; and, out of all these, forms, for her own sorrow, the most complete image of misery and distress." [2]

The interchange of places that we experience when we look at suffering happens also when we contemplate a moral struggle.

"When the original passions of the person principally concerned are in perfect accord with the sympathetic emotions of the spectator, they necessarily appear to this last just and proper, and suitable to their objects; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the case home to himself, he finds that they do not coincide with what he feels, they necessarily appear to him unjust and improper, and unsuitable to the causes which excite them. To approve of the passions of another, therefore, as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them; and not to approve of them as such is the same thing as to observe that we do not entirely sympathize with them." [3]

C. How we judge our own actions. The principle of self-approbation and of self-disapprobation Smith also bases upon the emotion of sympathy. But its derivation is a little less direct. We must go one step further. If we are considering a course of action we must project it outside of ourselves and then ask the question: If I were a spectator and were looking at myself from without, could I sympathize with the course of action I have intended to pursue? Or would my feeling of

[1] *Op. c.*, Part I, Sect. i, Ch. 1, p. 3. [2] *Op. c.*, p. 8. [3] *Op. c.*, Part I Sect. i, Ch. 3, p. 16.

fellowship be drawn to the other side? According as I would answer this question, one way or the other, so would I have to approve or condemn my intended course of action.

In judging of our own conduct we simply think of ourselves as seen by others. "We either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, according as we feel that, when we place ourselves in the situation of another man, and view it, as it were, with his eyes and from his station, we either can or can not entirely enter into and sympathize with the sentiments and motives which influenced it." [1]

Consequently, it might seem that the object of a good man is to live so as to obtain the praise of others, and that in the enjoyment of their good opinion consists the reward of virtue. But not so. Our true course is to act not so as to gain the applause of others, but so that we know in our hearts that whether praised or blamed our conduct *deserves* approbation. This consciousnes, this witness of conscience, to the merit of our actions, this is the reward of virtue.

"A woman who paints could derive, one should imagine, but little vanity from the compliments that are paid to her complexion. These, we should expect, ought rather to put her in mind of the sentiments which her real complexion would excite, and mortify her the more by contrast. To be pleased with such groundless applause is a proof of the most superficial levity and weakness." [2]

D. Sympathy and utility. The function of utility is to bestow a beauty and charm upon the moral actions of men. It is seldom, however, the primary reason why we approve of any act. This he attempts to show by an analysis of virtue. "That self-command, in the same manner, by which we restrain our present appetites, in order to gratify them more fully upon another occasion, is approved of, as much under the

[1] *Op. c.*, Part III, Ch. i, p. 189. [2] *Op. c.*, Part III, Ch. ii, p. 196.

aspect of propriety as under that of utility. When we act in this manner the sentiments which influence our conduct seem exactly to coincide with those of the spectator. The spectator does not feel the solicitations of our present appetites. To him the pleasure which we are to enjoy a week hence, or a year hence, is just as interesting as that which we are to enjoy this moment. . . . When we abstain from present pleasure, in order to secure greater pleasure to come, when we act as if the remote object interested us as much as that which immediately presses upon the senses, as our affections exactly correspond with his own, he cannot fail to approve of our behavior; and as he knows from experience how few are capable of this self-command he looks upon our conduct with a considerable degree of wonder and admiration."[1]

Certain it is, claims Smith, that the virtuous acts of which we approve are useful, but the reason for our approval in the last analysis is not so much their utility as our ability to sympathize with the line of conduct that is followed.

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[1] *Op. c.*, Part IV, Ch. ii, pp. 327–8.

CHAPTER III

The Stoic Ethics of Instinct

Chronologically the Stoic ethics [1] was developed from that of Socrates through Plato and Aristotle. But it was more of a departure from the original doctrine of Socrates than had hitherto been attempted. With the three great minds of Greek thought ethics preserved a certain continuity, the disciple merely unfolding still further the doctrines he had received from his master. But in the Stoic ethics we meet with a distinctly new departure. Novel ideas are introduced which are not the unfolding of the old, but spring from the general system of a new philosophy. Ethics was no longer as it was with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, a pure development from the concept of man's function in life, but became dependent upon the truth or falsity of the pantheism, which was the keynote of the entire Stoic philosophy.

18. The Stoic Philosophy. The Stoics looked upon all things as having developed from a primal fiery matter which they identified with God. The world, they maintained, is but a part of this matter that has been differentiated in the course of time. In so far and no further is it distinct from God. God is not only the primal matter but also the primeval force, and as such he still pervades the Universe and all things that are within it. They have no other power than that which was

[1] The Stoic School of Philosophy was founded by Zeno (about 350–260 B.C.) and continued by his pupils Cleanthes and Aristo. It was given new life by Chrysippus (280–206 B.C.). It was introduced into Roman life by Panætius (died about 108 B.C.), and there enjoyed a prolonged popularity. The analysis of Stoic morality here given is taken from the account of Zeno by Diogenes Laertius.

at first derived from the original divine energy. As all things came forth from God, so they will return again and be consumed in the final conflagration, which will restore the primal fire from which the Universe has been derived. Owing to the fact that all things are animated by the Divinity, they are moved to this end by the principle of life within them.

19. The Stoic Ethics. *A. The instinct of nature.* The motion of things to their end manifests itself in them as an impulse (ὁρμή) or blind instinct, a cardinal concept in Stoic ethics. This fundamental impulse of all living beings is the instinct of self-preservation. In virtue of this instinct an organism chooses that which is beneficial to itself and rejects that which is injurious. Whence it is evident that pleasure is not the central point of our endeavor. "But as for what some people say, that the first inclination of animals is to pleasure, they say what is false. For they say that pleasure, if there be any such thing at all, is an accessory only, which nature, having sought it out by itself, as well as those things which are adapted to its constitution, receives incidentally in the same manner as animals are pleased, and plants made to flourish." [1]

B. The supreme good. This fundamental inclination, which chooses what is good and rejects what is evil, points out to us our chief good: to live according to nature. The reason why it leads to our chief good is that "our individual natures are all parts of universal nature; on which account the chief good is to live in a manner corresponding to nature, and that means corresponding to one's own nature and to universal nature; doing none of those things which the common law of mankind is in the habit of forbidding, and that common law is identical with that right reason which pervades everything, being the same

[1] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Men*, vii, § 52 ed. of Didot, Paris, 1850, p. 178. Translation by C. D. Yonge, M.A., ed. Bohn, London: George Bell and Sons, p. 290, 1901.

with Jupiter, who is the regulator and chief manager of all existing things." [1]

If a rational being does wrong it is because he allows himself to be misled by the deceitful appearances of exterior things or yields to the influence of perverted spirits. Nature herself has implanted within us none but good instincts. Instinct, not freedom, is the foundation of Stoic morality. It is common to men, animals and plants. It is but the manifestation of the all-pervading life of the Deity, who dwells in all, works through all, and directs all by absolute necessity.

C. The concept of virtue. It is quite natural in a system of ethics that excludes the concept of freedom that the Socratic explanation of virtue in terms of knowledge should be adopted and pushed to its uttermost limit. All their definitions of virtue involve as a common element knowledge, and as a specific character some particular kind of information.[2] The opposite of virtue is vice. As the former is knowledge, so the latter is ignorance. "The vices are ignorance of those things, the virtues are the knowledge." [3]

Virtue alone is good and vice alone is bad. Virtue alone is therefore to be desired; vice alone to be shunned. Everything else whatsoever is indifferent and is to be neither desired nor shunned. "They divide all existing things into good, bad, and indifferent. The good are the virtues, prudence, justice, manly courage, temperance, and the rest of the like qualities. The bad are the contraries, folly, injustice, and the like. Those are indifferent which are neither beneficial nor injurious, such as life, health, pleasure, beauty, strength, riches, a good reputation, nobility of birth; and their contraries, death, disease, labor, disgrace, weakness, poverty, a bad reputation, baseness of birth, and the

[1] *Op. c.*, vii, 53, p. 178. Yonge's translation, p. 291.
[2] *E. g.* Justice is a knowledge of what ought to be, what ought to be avoided, and what is indifferent. *Op. c.*, VII, 54, p. 178. Yonge's translation, p. 293.
[3] *Op. c.*, VII, 54, p. 179. Yonge's translation, p. 293.

like." All indifferent things are not equally so. For some help to a well-regulated life, and these are preferred. Others hinder it and are rejected. Still others are in the strict sense indifferent. In fact when the Stoics came to popularize their teaching the high ideal of indifference was considerably softened down.[1]

D. The Stoic ideal of practical life. In a chapter on the "Counsels of Perfections"[2] Arnold has gathered together from many sources the practical maxims of Stoic morality. He there gives the daily routine which these maxims would outline had any Stoic ever put them together as a rule of life. "In the early morning he (the Stoic) shakes off sleep, rousing himself to do the day's work of a man. Having clothed himself, he turns his mind toward his Maker, and sings his praises; he resolves during the coming day to coöperate in his purposes, and to bear cheerfully any burden that may be placed upon him. He will then give a short time to gymnastic exercises for the good of his health, after which, if his strength allows it, he will take, winter or summer, a plunge into the cold bath; next comes the slightest of meals; then a short nap or reverie. From this he is aroused by the stir around him, and he then applies himself to the day's studies, being careful to alternate reading and writing, so that his mind may be neither exhausted by the latter nor relaxed by the former. Later on he will consider his practical duties towards his relatives, his friends, and society in general. He will order his household and settle the disputes of his dependents. He will visit his friends, saying a word here or there in season, but not (like the Cynics) to all and sundry. He will encourage those who are making progress in virtue, and sharply warn those who are in danger of a fall. He advises a young mother to nurse her child at her own breast; and when he meets with objections, points out the wisdom and propriety of obeying

[1] Cf. Zeller, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics*, p. 285 ff.
[2] *Roman Stoicism*, pp. 357–379.

the prescriptions of nature. Returning home, he will again enjoy some slight bodily exercise, joining perhaps in a game of ball; his thoughts, however, will not always turn on the success of the game, but he will consider how many principles in physics and ethics may be illustrated by it. Now that evening comes on, he sits down to a meal (not over-elaborate) in the company of one or two favorite pupils. Afterwards comes the temptation to burn the midnight oil in gathering seeds of wisdom for the morrow from the well-thumbed manuscript of Cleanthes or, it may be, of Epicurus. Retiring to his chamber, he will examine his conscience, review the events of the past day and be at peace with himself before he sleeps." [1]

E. Stoicism and Christianity. Stoicism has frequently been compared with Christianity, and it may, therefore, be well to indicate certain points of difference. In the first place the concept of God is fundamentally different and this must separate Christian and Stoic morality widely. The God of Christianity is a personal God with whom we can commune in prayer. The God of Stoicism is identified with nature, the ether pervading all, the blind force of nature which drives the universe and man to their final consummation in the universal conflagration from which a new world will be born. If the Stoic does not obey God and act according to reason, he considers himself silly or stupid, but not false to the personal relationship of love between himself and his Creator. Of that he had no inkling.

Christianity appeals to my freedom and responsibility, arousing my slumbering powers to the struggle for perfection; Stoicism excuses my falls and smothers my sorrows by telling me that it could not have been otherwise. All is ruled by necessity. I am simply ground down by the machinery of nature.

[1] *Roman Stoicism*, pp. 359–360. The reader must consult the original for references to the writings of the various Stoics from which each one of the above rules has been drawn.

The Stoics point out as my highest end, life in conformity with nature, peace in the utter suppression of all emotion, joy as well as sorrow, in the placid tranquillity of pure indifference. Far different is the end of the Christian. Life in accordance with reason is but the stepping stone to a supernatural life transcending reason. All emotions are not to be suppressed, but evil passion is to give way to the enthusiasm of the soul that labors in the vineyard of the Lord, consecrated wholly to its God. The end of man is not emotionless tranquillity, but peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.[1]

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[1] Cf. hereon, CHOLLET, *La Moral Stoicienne*.

CHAPTER IV

The Ethics of Intuition

20. Cudworth. The moral philosophy of Ralph Cudworth, whom we take as a typical exponent of the ethics of intuition, is characterized more by an accentuation of the absolute and eternal character of morality than by a theory of how we know the difference between right and wrong. His writings were called forth by the polemic against Hobbes. But his *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* had the misfortune to be published long after the author's death when the controversy between the absolute and conditionate morality had progressed far beyond the condition in which it stood while Hobbes and Cudworth were still alive.

Ralph Cudworth was born in England in 1617. In 1630 he went to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and took the degree of Master of Arts in 1639. "Soon after he was chosen fellow of this college and became an eminent tutor there, and had at one time eight-and-twenty pupils; an instance scarce ever known before, even in the largest colleges of the University."[1] In 1644 he took the degree Bachelor of Divinity, one of his two theses being: *Dantur boni et mali rationes aeternæ et indispensabiles.* In 1651 he took the degree Doctor of Divinity and became master of Christ's College in 1654. In 1678 he published at London his *True Intellectual System of the Universe.* He died June 26, 1688. His *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* did not appear until 1731. Though living amid stirring times, Cudworth was interested mainly in study. His works were too ponderous and learned to awaken general interest.[2]

[1] Thomas Birch in Vol. I of his works, p. 8.

[2] The sources for the Life of Cudworth are: (1) The Life in the first volume of Thomas Birch's edition of his works. (2) That in Mosheim's Latin translation of the *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, Jena, 1733.

A. The nature of right and wrong. The *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* starts with a criticism of the opinion that right and wrong are purely relative. It argues that not only is morality independent of positive legislation, but even God himself cannot change its precepts; for to say the contrary would involve the absurd consequence "that to prohibit the love of God or command the hatred of God is not inconsistent with the nature of God, but only with his free will; that it is not inconsistent with the natural equity of God to command blasphemy, perjury, lying, etc.,"[1] hence, it concludes, God cannot make a thing right or wrong any more than he could make a body triangular without having the nature and properties of a triangle. "Things are what they are, not by will but by nature."[2] Whatever exists, therefore, it is claimed, must have its own nature; this cannot be changed by omnipotence itself. There is no such thing as an arbitrary essence. "Wherefore the natures of justice and injustice cannot be arbitrarious things that may be applicable by will indifferently to any actions or dispositions whatsoever."[3] If God himself cannot make things right or wrong, *a fortiori* human legislation is powerless to do so. The binding power of the legislator "cannot be the product of the mere will of the commander, but it must proceed from something else; namely, the right or authority of the commander, which is founded in natural justice and equity, and an antecedent obligation to obedience in the subjects."[4]

B. The perception of right and wrong. Cudworth's theory of perception has been compared to the Kantian theory of knowledge. Both indeed recognize certain forms of knowledge; but Cudworth in so doing approaches Plato rather than Kant.

[1] *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, Book I, Ch. i, § 5. Edition of Cudworth's works edited by Birch, New York, 1838, Vol. II, p. 372. Original edition of 1731, p. 11.
[2] *Op. c.*, I, ii, § 1. (1731, p. 14; 1838, p. 373.)
[3] *Op. c.*, I, ii, § 2. (1731, p. 17; 1838, p. 374.)
[4] *Op. c.*, I, ii, § 3. (1731, p. 19; 1838, p. 375.)

According to Cudworth, "the soul is not a mere *tabula rasa*, a naked and passive thing, which has no innate furniture of its own, nor anything at all in it, but what was impressed upon it without (sic); for if it were so, then there could not possibly be any such thing as moral good and evil." [1] The reason for this is that if the soul were a *tabula rasa* it would have to get all its knowledge from the senses. Now good and evil do not exist outside the mind in the objects themselves, nor are they capable of being perceived by the senses. All immutable essences, those of morality included, preëxist in our souls. In the process of perception we understand the meaning of sensations by means of preëxisting notions. As the written or spoken word is to our comprehension of the meaning so are our sensations to the preexisting notions.[2]

These preëxisting notions are derived by particular intellectual beings from the Infinite Eternal Mind.[3] They are but the expressions of the eternal and immutable essence of God, and morality is absolute and unchangeable because it flows to us from the mind of God.

C. The criterion of right and wrong. The criterion of right and wrong is the same as that of truth and falsehood. Cudworth in the last analysis adopts the criterion of Descartes.

"The criterion of true knowledge is not to be looked for anywhere abroad without our own minds, neither in the height above nor in the depths beneath, but only in our knowledge and in conceptions themselves. For the entity of all theoretical truth is nothing else but clear intelligibility, and whatever is clearly conceived, is an entity and a truth; but that which is false, Divine power itself cannot make it to be clearly and distinctly understood, because falsehood is a nonentity, and a clear conception is an entity; and omnipotence itself cannot make a nonentity to be an entity." [4]

[1] *Op. c.*, Book IV, Ch. vi. (1731, pp. 286–7.) [2] Cf. *op. c.*, Book IV, Ch. iii.
[3] Cf. *op. c.*, Book IV, Ch. vi, § 13. [4] *Op. c.*, IV, v, § 5. (1731, p. 272; 1838, pp. 484–5.)

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21. Samuel Clarke. As the ethics of Cudworth were developed in opposition to that of Hobbes, so Samuel Clarke arose as the opponent of Locke. With Cudworth the essence of right and wrong is unanalyzed. It is merely stated to be one of the eternal notions of the mind. In Clarke we find essentially the same doctrine as in Cudworth, but it is further developed. So far, indeed, that it almost transcends the limits of pure intuition and approaches the rational ethics of Aristotle and the Scholastics.

Samuel Clarke was born at Norwich, October 11, 1675. In 1691 he went to Caius College, Cambridge, where the Philosophy of Descartes was at the time the established philosophy. After taking his first degree he published a Latin translation of Rohault's textbook of natural philosophy before he was twenty, a work founded on the system of Descartes. He then took up the study of divinity. His chief philosophical works were the sermons preached for the Boyle Lectures, 1704–5. They were published as *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, London, 1705; and *A discourse concerning the unchangeable obligations of natural religion*, London, 1706. The former was translated into French and appeared at Amsterdam, 1717. The correspondence which he carried on with Leibnitz appeared in 1717. He was a voluminous writer and editor of the classics. He died May 17, 1729.[1]

[1] The sources for Clarke's life are: The Life by Benjamin Hoadley, Bishop of Winchester, in the first volume of Clarke's works, pp. i–xiv, and the *Historical Memoirs* of Whiston.

A. Right and wrong perceived by intuition. According to Clarke we perceive right and wrong as we do all self-evident truths. The duties of morality "are so notoriously plain and self-evident that nothing but the extremest stupidity of mind, corruption of manners, or perverseness of spirit, can possibly make any man entertain the least doubt concerning them. For a man endued with reason to deny the truth of these things is the very same thing as if a man that has the use of his sight should, at the same time that he beholds the sun, deny that there is any such thing as light in the world; or as if a man that understands geometry or arithmetic should deny the most obvious and known propositions of lines or numbers, and perversely contend that the whole is not equal to all its parts, or that a square is not double to a triangle of equal base and height." [1]

It is indeed true that as two colors shade over one into another, so right and wrong seem at times scarcely distinguishable. Though it may perplex us to define them, "Yet right and wrong are nevertheless in themselves totally and essentially different, even altogether as much as white and black, light and darkness." [2]

The distinction, however, is a question of intuition, not of reason. We perceive morality as we perceive anything else that is perfectly evident. Still there is a difference between the assent to self-evident truth and obedience to moral law; the one man cannot withhold, the other he can. [3]

B. The standard of morality. The proximate nature of right and wrong is manifested to us in our perception of the fitness of things. It is fit that there should be a social order in the world and that the citizens of a land should be subject to the higher powers, and that children should obey their parents,

[1] *A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion,* by Samuel Clarke, London, 1706, pp. 50–51. The 2d edition, London, 1708, has the same paging.
[2] *Op. c.,* p. 58.
[3] *Op. c.,* pp. 64–65.

etc. The fitness of morality is perfectly evident and consists in the relation that one thing actually bears to another. If, however, we ask for the ultimate reason why the present relation which things bear one to another is right, it must be sought in the divine ideals. These divine ideals should also be the ideals of man. "The same reason of things, with regard to which the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself to act in constant conformity to the eternal rules of justice, equity, goodness and truth, ought also constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings to govern all their actions by the same rules." [1]

The penalty of transgression is in the present state of mankind a necessary sanction for the moral law. It is not, however, the sole reason for moral righteousness. "The dread of superior power and authority, and the sanction of rewards and punishments, however, indeed absolutely necessary to the government of frail and fallible creatures and truly the most effectual means of keeping them in their duty, is yet really in itself only a secondary and additional obligation, or inforcement of the first. The original obligation of all . . . is the eternal reason of things; that reason which God himself . . . obliges himself to govern the world by." [2]

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[1] *Op. c.*, p. 62. [2] *Op. c.*, p. 69.

CHAPTER V

The Ethics of Reason: The Autonomous Ethics of Kant

22. Kant. With Immanuel Kant, ethics is a science that gives us certainty after a critical inquiry into the foundations of knowledge has shown that no certain knowledge is possible by theoretical reason. But, while theoretical reason fails to prove the fundamental propositions of traditional philosophy it does not disprove them. Theoretical reason, therefore, leads us nowhere. *Practical* reason starts with the facts of common everyday moral experience and finds in these facts elements of certainty which cannot be doubted.

Immanuel Kant was born in Königsberg, April 22, 1724. His forefathers came from Scotland.[1] On the advice of the "pietistic" minister, Franz Schultz, Kant was sent by his mother to the Collegium Fridericianum to be educated for the ministry. Here his education (1733–1740) was mainly classical. He determined to devote himself entirely to philology, and dreamt of books that he would write and sign Cantius. In 1740 Kant matriculated in the theological faculty of the University of Königsberg. From time to time during this period he preached in the neighboring churches. At the University his interest in philosophy and natural science was aroused; and at the end of his career there he published (1747) his first work, *Thoughts on the True Evaluation of Dynamic Forces*. Kant was then employed as a teacher in private families. In 1756 he became Privat-Dozent (Instructor) at the University of Königsberg. In 1770 he became ordinary professor of logic and metaphysics at Königsberg, declining two invitations—one to Erlangen and another to Jena.

[1] His father spelled his name Cant. The philosopher changed the spelling to Kant, to avoid the false pronunciation Zant (K. Fischer, Kant's *Leben*, 1860, p. 9).

On the occasion of his habilitation he defended an essay *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and Intelligible World*, which already contained the germs of his critical philosophy. This professorship Kant held with conscientious punctuality to his duties to his death. His lectures were lively and stimulating.[1] He himself said that one must not expect to learn philosophy from him, but how to philosophize. His *Critique of Pure Reason* appeared in 1781 (second edition, 1787). The *Foundations for a Metaphysic of Morality* came out in 1785. The *Critique of Practical Reason*, his chief work on Ethics, appeared in 1788. The *Critique of Judgment* was published in 1790. He died February 12, 1804.[2]

A. The ideal of duty determined by the facts of moral experience. In the opening sentences of his *Foundations for a Metaphysic of Morality*, Kant brings forward as the basis of ethics the indubitable facts of moral experience. "There is nothing whatsoever in the world, nor indeed is it possible to think of anything outside of it, which can be looked upon as good without limitation, except alone a *good will*. Understanding, wit, power of judgment, and whatever mental endowments might be mentioned; or courage, decisiveness, stability as temperamental qualities are all without doubt good and desirable. But they can become most wicked and injurious if the will is not good that receives from them its characteristic distinction. Power, riches, honor, even health itself, and all that, under the name of happiness, goes to make up well-being and contentment, often give rise to pride and haughtiness, if a good will is not present to moderate the spirit, and correct and guide the conduct. Furthermore, a well-balanced and non-partisan onlooker can never look with complacency upon the uninter-

[1] Fichte, however, who came with great expectations to hear him, said that he was disappointed and found his lectures "sleepy." (K. FISCHER, *op. c.*, p. 32.)

[2] The main sources for the life of Kant are: R. B. JACKMANN, *Immanuel Kant geschildert in Briefen an einen Freund*, Königsberg, 1804; L. E. BOROWSKI, *Darstellung des Lebens und Charakters Immanuel Kants*, Königsberg, 1804; C. A. CH. WASIANSKI, *Immanuel Kant in seinen letzten Lebensjahren*, Königsberg, 1804. These sources are republished in A. HOFFMAN'S *Immanuel Kant*. Jackmann was Kant's pupil and amanuensis (1784–1794) during the height of his fame. Kant himself read Borowski's life, but forbade its publication till after his death. Wasianski lived with Kant from 1794 till his death.

rupted success of a person unadorned by the slightest trace of a pure and good will. Consequently, a good will is the indispensable condition that one should even be worthy of happiness." [1]

The analysis of this popular experience is but a bringing into view of the indubitable facts of the moral order. It shows that there is a difference between happiness and goodness, and that the will itself is that wherein true goodness lies, for well-wishing alone, and not anything that is wished or anything that may flow from the will, is absolutely and unconditionately good.

In the first place, goodness evidently does not lie in action done from inclination and in violation of duty. Such actions are therefore ruled out of consideration at once. Furthermore, actions which are in accordance with duty, but are done from inclination or self-love, lack the essential character of moral goodness; viz., motivation solely by the dictates of duty.

"For example, it is certainly in accordance with duty that the merchant should not overcharge his unsophisticated customer. Where there is much business the wise merchant does not do so, but maintains a fixed general price for everybody, so that a child may purchase at his store as well as any one else. People as a matter of fact are dealt with honorably. But this alone is far from sufficient to make us believe that the merchant acts thus out of duty and the fundamental principles of honesty. His own advantage demands it, and above this motive one can scarcely suppose that he has an immediate inclination towards his customers so that from love he would not give one of them any advantage in buying over another. Consequently, his action is done neither from a sense of duty nor from immediate inclination, but purely from a selfish inclination." [2]

In the second place, "An action done from a sense of duty

[1] *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Erster Abschnitt Immanuel Kant's Sammtliche Werke.* Herausgegeben von G. Hartenstein, 1867, iv, p. 240.
[2] *Op. c.*, p. 245.

has its moral value not from the end (Absicht) which it attains but from the maxim by which it is determined." [1]

The evidence for this lies in the analysis of popular experience, which shows that to succeed or to fail in the attainment of the object at which the action aims does not alter the moral character of the act. So long as my intention is good, the action has the same moral value whether it succeeds or fails. From these two truths,[2] it follows that *duty is the obligation to act out of reverence* for the law. Reverence is paid only to the principle upon which I act. I may desire, that is to say, have a natural inclination for the object of my action, but I do not reverence that which flows from my action, but only that from which it proceeds.

In a moral action, therefore, what determines our will is objectively the law itself, subjectively pure reverence for the law as the principle of duty. What, then, is the law of duty? Since it rises above my particular inclinations it must transcend the individual and be truly universal. My law, the principle upon which I act, has nothing to do with the special determinants that affect me personally in this particular instance. Were anyone else placed in the same position he should act according to the same principle of duty that determines me. This simply means that "in all cases I must act so that I can at the same time will that my maxim should become a universal law." This would mean that all men would be bound, as if by mechanical necessity, to do as I did in the instance in question.

For example, "When I find myself in a difficult situation would it be lawful for me to make a promise, intending later on to break it? At the outset it is well to distinguish the two meanings of the question: Is it prudent or is it in accordance with duty to make a false promise? Without doubt it is often

[1] *Op. c.*, p. 247.
[2] Namely (1) actions done from direct inclination have no moral value, and (2) an action done from a sense of duty has its moral value not from the end which it attains but from the maxim by which it is determined.

prudent to do so . . . In order to solve this problem (can a lying promise be harmonized with duty?) in the shortest and most unmistakable manner, I simply ask myself: Would I be content that my maxim (get out of trouble by a false promise) should be established as a universal law binding upon all others as well as myself? Could I really say to myself: Every one can make a false promise when he gets in trouble and can get out in no other way? I would in this way soon see that while I might will the lie, a universal law of lying I could not will. For after such a law promises would cease to exist. For it would be vain for me to pledge my future acts to others when they would not trust my promise, or if they should rashly do so they could pay me back eventually in the same coin. Consequently, as soon as this maxim of mine is made a universal law it must be self-destructive." [1]

We cannot help but feel that, whatever the flaws of the Kantian position, we are here in the presence of a man whose doctrine is essentially nobler than the self-centered prudence of the English Hedonists.

B. Duty as transcending moral experience. The concept of duty so far considered is drawn from the ordinary facts of experience. Nevertheless, it is not derived from experience, but transcends it. I act upon a principle that I have never seen perfectly realized. A friend ought to be perfectly disinterested, and yet I have never been, and have never met a perfect friend. Furthermore, the moral law not only binds men with whom I come in contact, but such is its universality that I realize that if other intelligent beings besides men do exist or ever will exist, they must be bound by the maxims of the moral law. Consequently, this moral law as it exists in my mind is not found in my experience, therefore is not derived from it.

If, therefore, the principle of morality is independent of

[1] *Op. c.*, pp. 250–1.

experience and based entirely upon pure reason, ethics must be developed from abstract and general principles, drawn from the moral law itself, without any admixture of other sciences, and without being contaminated by any elements of sensuous desire. A transition must be made from the ethics of the popular mind to the metaphysics of morality.

C. "Ought" and "Must." This transition is made by a comparison of the law of nature with the law of morality. In nature everything acts by absolute necessity according to law. Man differs from the things of nature because, though bound to act in conformity with law, he may nevertheless refrain from so acting and transgress the law. He is bound to the law by reason, he conforms to it by will. He *ought* to obey, but irrational things *must* obey. If his will were absolutely good it would always choose the right and act in conformity with the law as infallibly as the planets execute their movements around the sun. With the Divine Will, therefore, or the will of a perfectly holy man, obligation ceases, *ought* has no longer any meaning. Will and the law *are* identified and we can no longer say that they *ought* to be.

D. The hypothetical and the categorical imperative. But with frail man obligation still exists. His obligations are expressed in formulæ called "imperatives." Of these we have two kinds. One commands conditionally and may be called hypothetical. There are many such imperatives. If you want so and so, then you must do so and so is the general form of the *hypothetical imperative.* Besides such imperatives there is another. It commands unconditionately, and so is termed the *categorical imperative,* or the imperative of morality. It expresses the law of duty. It does not hold for a particular individual, but for all. It is not dependent upon desire, but transcends it. It lays down a *fiat* that is free from all conditions, and says that I *must,*

independently of any desire. It does not say that I must do anything in particular, but only that when I do act, the maxim according to which I act must be one of absolute universality.

The categorical imperative therefore is one and it runs:

"*Act only according to that maxim by which thou can'st at the same time will that it should be a universal law.*"[1]

Or, bearing in mind that the perfect will should infallibly choose the good, the categorical imperative may be expressed:

"*Act as if the maxim of thy action, through thy will, should become a universal law of nature.*" [2]

Now if anything can be found which is in itself an end, and never a means, this must be the foundation for the categorical imperative. That which is always an end and never a means is a person. Things may be used as a means—inorganic and organic nature, plants and animals I may sacrifice to my ends—but a person never. By a new transformation the categorical imperative becomes "*Act so that thou dost regard humanity in your own person, as well as in the person of every one else, always as an end, and never as a means.*" [3]

E. Freedom of the will. From the very fact that we recognize the absolute validity of the categorical imperative and know that we ought to act in accordance with it, we admit that we are moral beings. As moral beings we are not mere natural forces. These act out of necessity, we, by the very fact that we are moral, act from freedom, which is but the causal energy of living, rational beings. We cannot, indeed, prove that we are free, but we know that we are moral beings. We suppose freedom in order to account for the facts of the moral order, the existence of the categorical imperative, and the distinction between the ethical and natural orders. Knowing, however,

[1] *Op. c.*, p. 269. [2] *L. c.* [3] *Op. c.*, p. 277.

that these facts cannot be doubted, we realize that a rational being must be a moral being, and a moral being is a free being, and therefore our freedom is inseparably connected with our rational nature.

Besides the freedom of the will there are two more very important concepts that Kant deduces from the categorical imperative. These are the immortality of the soul and the existence of God.

F. Immortality of the soul. Our will is bound by the natural law to realize the supreme good. Our destiny, therefore, is to absolute perfection; to perfect conformity of our will with the moral law. But at no moment of our existence do we ever realize this absolute perfection. Nevertheless, the certainty of the moral law tells us that this is our obligation and our destiny. We cannot be morally bound to attain to what is in its very nature unattainable. Absolute perfection, therefore, is attainable because we are bound thereto by the categorical imperative. In this life it is not attained, therefore there must be another life in which we shall continue to approach the ideal of perfect holiness. Since, however, no matter how close we may approach to this ideal we are nevertheless removed from it, the goal is only attainable in an endless existence.[1] In other words, immortality is a necessary postulate of the moral order.

G. The existence of God. In the concept of the supreme good there are two elements: one is that of morality, the other is that of happiness. The moral law, in virtue of its unconditionate character, must lead us to absolute perfection and in so doing it must also bring us to perfect happiness. Perfect happiness is the state of existence in which everything happens according to our wishes and our will. This depends upon the harmony of na-

[1] Cf. *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft II*, ii, 4th ed., Hartenstein, Leipzig, 1867, V. pp. 128–130.

ture and the moral law. My own desires, and the external conditions on which their fulfilment depends, are all ruled by the law of nature. In spite of the fact that my perfect happiness depends upon the conformity of nature to my will, I am bound by the categorical imperative to act without any regard whatsoever to my desires and their fulfilment; to despise nature if it conflicts with the duties imposed by the moral law. Consequently, I cannot hope that obedience to the moral law must lead me to happiness, if there is nothing to be taken into consideration except my will, which is bound by the categorical imperative, and nature, which is governed by mechanical necessity. Nevertheless, I must strive for the highest good, and in this highest good my perfect happiness must lie, and this must be attainable, for I cannot be *morally* bound to seek that which is unattainable. Therefore the dependence of my happiness on obedience to the moral law, while incapable of demonstration by pure reason, is a necessary postulate of the practical reason. This dependence, having no source either in nature or in man, must arise from something outside of both, that is capable of bringing into harmony happiness and duty, the workings of nature and the demands of the categorical imperative.

"Consequently, there is postulated the existence of a cause of all nature that is distinct from nature, which contains in itself the ground for this dependence, namely the exact agreement of happiness with morality." [1]

The causality of this being is a moral causality, because it works in view of an idea of the law. Such a being must be free and intelligent.

"Consequently, the Supreme Cause of Nature, in so far as it is presupposed by the highest good, is a being who by understanding and will is the cause, and therefore the originator of Nature. Such a being answers to our concept of God." [2]

[1] *Op. c.*, II, ii, 5, p. 131. [2] *L. c.*

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CHAPTER VI

The Ethics of Reason: Functional Ethics

23. Socrates. As we look into the history of thought, we shall realize more and more fully that no great school of philosophy has ever been entirely independent or isolated from preceding systems. Not only is this true of entire schools but also of individual thinkers. The greater they are, the deeper do their roots descend into the soil of ages past. They grow upon a ground that is rich with the fertilization of crumbling systems. They build them up again by transformation, as the woods of to-day grow upon the decay of some primeval forest, changing the fallen trunks of centuries ago into the delicate buds of an infant spring. So every mind is dependent for nourishment upon the thought of those who have gone before. One may reject and break with the systems of the past, but the school to which he adheres, or the philosophy he dreams to have created, has its roots deep in the soil of antiquity. It is not necessary that one should read in order to imbibe the doctrines of the past, for long ago through the human voice and the channels of the press, they have filtered down to the levels of daily life and the common opinions of men. Our own thought is the offspring of daily conversation and the spontaneous activity of our mind. Without the former we should never commence to think; and without the latter we should be as dumb as beasts, thinking not for ourselves and understanding not the things that are said. So it happens that if anyone thinks at all he builds upon the past, and no system of philosophy has ever been produced independent of preceding thought. From

time to time it has happened that some great man systematized and crystallized the thought in some field of speculation. He appears as a founder, and indeed he is. But the foundation that he builds rests upon a soil that has been slowly deposited in ages past. Such a man was Socrates, the first of the moralists, the first who ever constructed a system of ethical thought, the man who crystallized the early moral speculations of the Greeks, and whose ethics was the basis of the systems built by Plato, Aristotle, and St. Thomas.

When Socrates came upon the field of ethical speculation, little had as yet been done. But before him by several centuries were the Homeric poems [1] which for generations had been the great textbook in Grecian moral training. They taught by example rather than precept. Their examples of courage in war, the love of friends, the wisdom of Nestor, the perseverance of Odysseus, the fidelity of Penelope, etc., showed what was right, affording the material which future speculation could analyze, and determine the essential difference between right and wrong. After the Homeric age the maxims of the Gnomic poets kept up the work of the moralist and their writings were, no doubt, well known to Socrates. We find in fact that the queen of all Greek poets, the great Sappho, anticipated Socrates in his doctrine that the good is beautiful and the beautiful good.[2] From these sources, and by an analysis and criticism of the doctrine of the Sophists, Socrates developed his own system of ethics. This he did not commit to writing. It has been preserved to us in the *Memorabilia of Xenophon*, and in the *Dialogues* of his immortal pupil, Plato.

Socrates (born probably 470–471 B.C.) lived in the days of Greece's greatest glory—those days that succeeded the Persian Wars. In all probability he received the usual athletic and musical training of the

[1] Herodotus says that Homer lived about 850 B.C. "I believe that Hesiod and Homer lived four hundred years before my time." Herodotus II, 53. Some modern writers place the Homeric age much earlier, and some deny the existence of a personal Homer altogether.
[2] Cf. ZELLER, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, 5th ed., Vol. I, p. 106.

Grecian youth. It is certain that he knew geometry and astronomy, and that he was personally familiar with the philosophers of his day. But who was his master in science or philosophy is entirely unknown. He seems to have given up sculpture—the trade of his father—for the higher calling of philosophy. To him philosophy meant moral and intellectual perfection, and he looked upon himself as inspired by God [1] to strive after the attainment of high ideals and to lead others along with him *per aspera ad astra*. His wife, Xantippe, seems not to have shared her husband's love of wisdom and her very name, even with the ancients, became synonymous with a scold. By simplicity of life, temperance in his habits, and poverty in dress, he was able to live up to his ideal of teaching for the pure love of imparting wisdom to others. His temperance was not asceticism and his pagan virtues did not reach the ideal of Christian morality. Still, his was a noble character, and the aspersions of his enemies perhaps only go to prove that with him, as with others, virtue was at last acquired after years of self-education. Toward the end of his life charges of deserting the gods of his people and introducing new ones, and of corrupting the Athenian youth, were brought against him. He was condemned to drink poison and died 399 B.C. Cardinal Manning has said of him: "The prudence of Socrates was his own moral state, and yet *non sine Numine*, for we may well believe that to him was granted no common share in the 'Light that lighteth every man that cometh into this world.' . . . In the midst of an intellectual frivolity and a moral degradation never surpassed in the history of mankind, made all the guiltier by reason of the culture and luxurious civilization of Athens, Socrates bore witness, until 70 years of age, to the supremacy of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, the four perfections of man in the order of nature." [2]

[1] Socrates often spoke of an inner guidance—a Daemonion to whose whisperings he harkened. Cf. note *infra* p. 87.

[2] *The Daemon of Socrates*, London, 1872, pp. 40–41.

The sources for the life and doctrine of Socrates are: XENOPHON's *Memorabilia*, PLATO's *Dialogues*, and the account of ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, XIII. DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *De vitis etc. clarorum philosophorum*, Liber II, Cap. V.

Socrates is the only great philosopher who never committed his doctrines to writing. Toward the end of his life he wrote a few poems, and no doubt in the course of his days he carried on some kind of a correspondence; but neither poems nor genuine Socratic letters have come down to us. Xenophon and Plato, who actually walked and talked with Socrates, give us two rather different accounts of their master's doctrine. Nevertheless, each account may be substantially correct. Each saw in the master what appealed to his own character and disposition, and preserved that to posterity, committing some error by overaccentuating his personal attitude. For the enormous literature, cf. UEBERWEG-HEINZE, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, J. M. BALDWIN, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*.

A. Embryonic character of the Socratic writings. Since Socrates was the first to construct a system of ethical thought, it is natural to expect that he did not treat the problems of ethics in detail, and that his solution of these problems took on something of a provisional character. The undeveloped condition of Socratic thought is particularly evident in his discussion of the nature of the good. His solution of this problem, as far as it goes, is both Platonic and Aristotelic. It might be either Hedonistic or Scholastic, simply because it is only a germinal solution. It is the embryo from which functional ethics naturally developed. Had this development never taken place, the assignment of Socrates to a definite class of moralists would have been a difficult task. He has left us in doubt as to what he means by the good, for though he raised the problem, he himself never gave it a definite solution.

B. The nature of the good. Xenophon tells us how he attempted to solve this problem for Aristippus, who, in order to catch him in his words, asked him if he knew of any thing good. He replied by enumerating a number of evils for which he confessed that he knew no good as a remedy. On being asked if he knew of anything beautiful, he replied that he knew of many things, and then went on to define the beautiful as something relative to the function of the thing that was said to be beautiful. A thing is beautiful when it fulfils its own special purpose with excellence. The beautiful and the good are therefore one and the same. "And do you imagine," said Socrates, "that the good is one thing and the beautiful another? Do you not know that with reference to the same objects, all things are both beautiful and good? Virtue, for instance, is not good with regard to some things and beautiful with regard to others; and persons, in the same way, are called beautiful and good with reference to the same objects, and human bodies, too, with reference to the same objects, appear beautiful and good; and in like manner all

other things, whatever men use, are considered beautiful and good with reference to the objects for which they are serviceable. 'Can a dung-basket, then,' said Aristippus, 'be a beautiful thing?' 'Yes, by Jupiter,' returned Socrates, 'and a golden shield may be an ugly thing, if the one is beautifully formed for its particular uses, and the other ill-formed.' " [1]

Beyond this definition of the good as that which performs its function well, Socrates never advanced.[2]

C. The end of man. He seems to have experienced some perplexity with his concept of the good when it came to a discussion of the end of man. Naturally the end of man ought to be the performance of his function, and a good man would be one who performed his function well, a bad one who performed it ill. The question then would arise, what is the function of man? In a conversation with Euthydemus, Socrates seems to admit that the only thing worthy of human endeavor is self-knowledge. " 'Is it not evident,' said Socrates, 'that men enjoy a great number of blessings in consequence of knowing themselves, and incur a great number of evils, through being deceived in themselves? For they who know themselves know what is suitable to them and distinguish between what they can do and what they cannot; and, by doing what they know how to do, procure for themselves what they need, and are prosperous, and, by abstaining from what they do not know, live blamelessly, and avoid being unfortunate.' " [3]

Knowledge of oneself, he says, is the only thing that we can speak of as good in itself without reference to other things. Ignorance in like manner is the only absolute evil. Falsehood, deceit, the enslaving of men, are only relative evils, for under some conditions they can be good and praiseworthy. Health and wisdom are good or evil according to the use that one makes

[1] *Memorabilia*, III, viii, translation by J. S. Watson.
[2] Cf. also *Memorabilia*, IV, vi, 8–9.
[3] *Memorabilia*, IV, ii, 26.

of them. Happiness itself is simply something made up of a number of goods. And if the things that make up our happiness are all good then we can say that our happiness is good, if not, it seems to us at least to have in it some admixture of evil.[1]

The reason why the knowledge of oneself is of such importance is that all virtue consists in knowledge. However, virtue is not the end of man nor the supreme good, because virtue is defined as the knowledge of the good. So that when we push our inquiry into the nature of the supreme good, Socrates never gets us any further than the statement: the good is that which performs its function well. The function of man is left unanalyzed. Socrates seems never to have had any deeper or more philosophical conception of goodness than the doing of many individual things well and thus avoiding misfortune and calamity.

D. The concept of virtue. It is worth mentioning as a characteristic of the Socratic ethics that temperance is identified with prudence. This arises from the definition of virtue as knowledge. If there is no element in virtue besides knowledge over and above prudence, there is no place for a virtue which gives strength to do that which one knows to be right. "Prudence and Temperance he did not distinguish; for he deemed that he who knew what was honorable and good, and how to practice it, and who knew what was dishonorable, and how to avoid it, was both prudent and temperate." [2]

F. Socrates not a Utilitarian. Socrates has been looked upon as a Utilitarian,[3] because his definition of the good as that which performs its function well seems to make the good identical with the useful, a concept from which Utilitarianism gets its name. We should note, however, that Socrates expressly

[1] Cf. *Memorabilia*, IV, ii.
[2] *Memorabilia*, III, ix, 4.
[3] Cf., for example, MILL, *Essay on Utilitarianism*, Ch. i. In his *Dissertations and Discussions*, Vol. III, 1882, p. 300.

declined in his dialogue with Euthydemus to call the final good happiness, and yet was unwilling or unable to say exactly what it was. Furthermore, the good was defined by Socrates as that which performs its function well. This concept lies at the basis of the ethical theories of Plato and Aristotle, which are not Utilitarian in character. Looking at the matter from the genetic point of view, we see that ethical theory in the mind of Socrates was as yet in an undifferentiated state. It could develop into a purely Utilitarian ethics or it could be given the turn which was actually given to it by Plato and Aristotle and become eventually the functional ethics of the Scholastics.

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CHAPTER VII

The Ethics of Reason: Functional Ethics

24. Plato. Plato was the pupil of Socrates. Along with the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon his dialogues are our chief sources for the doctrine of his master. In reading these two sources one will be struck by the great similarity of procedure. The reason for this is that Xenophon gave us not only the doctrine of Socrates, but also his manner of teaching. This was conversational. And the Platonic dialogues are all modeled after the semi-public disputations of Socrates and his pupils. Plato's style may therefore be considered as having been built upon that which he heard by word of mouth from his master. Not only did Plato derive his style from Socrates but also a great deal of his doctrine. What he took, however, he borrowed but to work over and develop. There is a distinct development from Socrates through Plato to Aristotle, and the growth, so far as ethics is concerned, is from the less to the more perfect. St. Thomas many centuries later carried out this same line of development, adding to ethics concepts unknown to the Greeks, and by means of Christian ideas solved problems that were complete enigmas in pagan philosophy.

Plato was born about the year 427 B.C. of wealthy and aristocratic parents in Athens or Ægina. In his youth he devoted no little attention to poetry and was the pupil of Socrates. Thanks to inherited wealth he was able to devote himself entirely to intellectual pursuits. After the death of Socrates he traveled in Egypt, Italy and Sicily; probably also in Asia Minor. In Sicily he aroused the ire of the Tyrant Dionysius, who imprisoned him and had him sold as

a slave in Ægina (about 387 B.C.). Redeemed by his friends, he surrounded himself with pupils in the Gardens of his Academy. He taught in the main by dialogues, after the manner of his master, Socrates. It is probable, however, that he also gave set lectures. Twice he interrupted his activity as a teacher to travel back to Sicily, thinking, perhaps, that through his powerful friend Dio he might give reality to the ideals of his philosophy of government. The last time he barely escaped with his life. Returning to Athens, he resumed (about 360 B.C.) his teaching in the Academy, which he continued without interruption to his death. This occurred, according to one account, suddenly, while the octogenarian philosopher was attending a wedding feast 347 B.C.[1]

A. Man's function in life. In the first book of Plato's Republic[2] we meet with a discussion of the function of the soul. He is but taking up the problem that his master had left unsettled. The discussion is preluded by an argument which shows that utter wickedness is incompatible with the conditions of human life. Evil doers act in concert. Their concerted action is the result of a remnant of justice, for if they were utterly depraved they would injure one another as well as their victims. Consequently, if they had been wholly unjust they would not have been capable of concerted action.

Seeing that utter injustice is an impossibility, the next question that arises is: Do the just have a happier life than the unjust? This problem, says Plato, involves the rule of human life. To solve it, he starts with the Socratic concept that all the things which we use in this world have a certain function—a function which cannot be performed by other things, or at least, not so well performed. The horse has his function and so

[1] The sources for the life of Plato are: DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *De vitis etc. clarorum philosophorum*, Liber III. APPULEIUS MADAURENSIS, *De dogmate Platonis*, in Vol. II of his *Opera Omnia, editio Francisci Oudenorpii, Lugduni Batavorum, 1823.*

[2] A more exact account such as would be required in a History of Ethics would distinguish in the Moral Philosophy of Plato a Socratic Period, during which he did not go far beyond the doctrine of his master, and a later period of full development, in which his Ethics, though rooted in the ideas of Socrates, nevertheless rose far above them. Cf. KOSTLEIN, *Geschichte der Ethik*, I, i, pp. 371 ff.

also a pruning knife. The ear hears, and nothing else can do so. The eye sees, and there is nothing in all the world which can perform this function in its stead. The excellence of these things consists in the efficient performance of their functions.

This being so, the soul must have its function as well as anything else. This function is to superintend, command, deliberate, and the like. For there is nothing else that can take the place of the soul in the performance of these functions. An evil soul therefore is a bad ruler and a good soul is a good ruler. Since justice is the true excellence of the soul, it follows that the "just man will live well, and the unjust man will live ill, . . . and he who lives well will be blessed and happy, and he who lives ill the reverse of happy." [1]

Here Plato has gone further than his master, who refused to connect the idea of happiness with that of virtue.

B. The four cardinal virtues. The Platonic concept of morality is still further brought out in his discussion of the four cardinal virtues. The basis of his doctrine on this point is dependent on his division of the soul into three parts. The highest part of the soul he termed rational and conceived of it as residing or at least functioning in the cranium. Less noble than the rational is the emotional soul conceived of as residing in the thorax with the heart, the seat of the emotions. Lower still is the appetitive soul, whose seat is in the third great compartment of the body, the abdominal cavity. Corresponding to these divisions of the soul there are three classes in the state: (1) Rulers whose characteristic virtue is *wisdom.* (2) Warriors to whom the virtue of *courage* is proper. (3) Laborers to whom the virtue of *temperance* belongs, but not exclusively, for it is the harmony between the rulers and the ruled. *Justice* is possessed by a member of any one of these classes, when he does well whatever part falls to his lot in the state.

[1] *The Republic*, Book I, Steph., 354. Jowett's trans., III, p. 34, 3rd Ed., New York, 1892.

The just man is an image of the just state. Wisdom rules in the subjection of the appetitive and the emotional soul to the rational. He is courageous who in pleasure and in pain clings to the commands of reason. He is temperate in whom the lower and higher souls are in harmony. He is just in whom each part of the soul is doing its own work, whether ruling or being ruled.[1]

C. The nature of the good. Plato does not stop with having so far transcended his master as to define the end of man as a harmony between his lower and higher selves. The end of man, he continues, must be the performance of the highest function of man. Lofty as is the ruling of the lower nature by the higher, there is something still nobler, on which the dominance of reason must in the last resort be dependent. This is the contemplation of the good. But what is the good? Can it be knowledge?[2] Those who maintain that the good is knowledge must tell us what they mean by knowledge, and then they say that by knowledge they mean the knowledge of the good, thus involving themselves in a vicious circle.

"And those who make pleasure their good are in equal perplexity; for they are compelled to admit that there are bad pleasures as well as good, . . . and therefore to acknowledge that bad and good are the same."[3]

If, then, the good is not pleasure, and does not consist in knowledge, in what, we may ask, does it consist? The answer to this question proceeds from one of the fundamental doctrines of Plato; viz., that of ideas. Since there are many good things, there must be one universal and absolute good. For to all things to which the word "many" may be applied there is an idea representing its essence. "Many" being applicable to good, there must be an idea of the good which is the essence of which all things partake that have the nature of good. It itself exists

[1] Cf. *The Republic*, Book IV.
[2] Plato seems here to be criticising Socrates.
[3] *The Republic*, Book VI, Steph. Jowett's translation, 505, III, p. 205.

as an independent being in a world of self-existent universal ideas. The essence of good, Plato more fully described by means of a simile. The sun is "in the visible world, in relation to sight and the things of sight, what the good is in the intellectual world in relation to mind and the things of mind." [1] As the Sun sends forth its light and shines upon the objects of this world and makes them visible to the eye, so the idea of the good radiates truth to the objects of the mind, and illumines the soul with understanding.[2]

D. The end of man. Plato compared this life to a cave in which human beings were bound, who had never seen the light of day. "They have been here from childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning round their heads. At a distance above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have before them, over which they show the puppets. . . . And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying vessels, which appear over the wall; also figures of men and animals, made of wood and stone and various materials; and some of the passengers, as you expect, are talking, and some of them are silent?" [3]

There is an echo in the cave, so that the men who are bound think that the voices come from before them; and they are deceived so far as to think that there is nothing behind them, that the shadows before them are the realities, and that the voices they hear are the voices of the shadows that they see. What now would be the experience of one, who, being liberated from his

[1] *The Republic*, Book VI, Steph. 508. Jowett's translation, III, p. 209.
[2] Compare with this a similar idea in the Thomistic analysis of Faith. 2. 2. Q. I, i and iii. God is resplendent with the Lumen Veritatis Primæ, which is his own very self, and which, shining upon the dogmas of Faith, illumines the soul in the act of believing.
[3] *The Republic*, Book VII, Steph. 514–515. Jowett's translation, III, p. 214.

imprisonment, was allowed for the first time to see the objects behind him and realize how he had been deceived all his life? What if, furthermore, he should be taken out into the light of day and see things in all the glory of the sunshine and turn his eyes up to heaven and see the sun itself by whose brilliancy all things are illumined? If this man felt it his duty to go back again into the cave and instruct the companions of his former darkness as to the nature of the shadows, how he would be mocked, how difficult would it be for him to gain a hearing, to tell his companions about the real objects that gave rise to the shadows, to explain to them all the things he had seen in the light of day, and how their brightness was but the reflected glory of the sun!

Such a man would be in the position of the philosopher who realizes that the things we now know are but the shadows of eternal realities. Having contemplated the idea of the good, he knows its glory and its majesty and how all truth flows from it as from its source. Even then he finds it hard to gain the minds of men for the realities, when they are captivated by the shadows of experience.

E. Theory of education. The function of education, which after all is determined by the theory of ethics, can be nothing else than to lead men from the shadows of experience to the realities of philosophy. All men, however, are not capable of being thus instructed. Consequently, at different points along their career as students, they are separated out for military service and the lower public offices. But he who is to become a ruler of the people must be taken away from the shadows of the world to lead a life of contemplation, beholding the essence of the idea of the good. This life, however, cannot last; at least during our present existence. The future ruler must leave it, go back again into the darkness of the cave of this world and take part in the regulation of human affairs. But he will only take his turn in the government of the state. He will have no

ambition for political power, but regard it as a necessary evil. For the ruler, there must be a far higher world than that of politics, "and the only life which looks down upon the life of political ambition is that of true philosophy." [1]

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[1] *The Republic*, Book VII, Steph. 521. Jowett's translation, Vol. III, p. 221.

CHAPTER VIII

The Ethics of Reason: Functional Ethics

25. Aristotle. In Aristotle we meet with a man of a very different type from that of his master Plato. Aristotle transmitted his philosophy in works that became classic for analysis and connected reasoning. Plato wrote only dialogues in which the thread of the argument is continually broken by the questions of the participants. Aristotle had a prosaic calculating temperament, while Plato was a Mystic. Aristotle arrived at his conclusions only by proceeding step by step in the process of reasoning, Plato often by insight and intuitions for which he could give no clear grounds of assent.

Aristotle was born in 384 B.C. at Stagira, whence he is often spoken of as the Stagirite. His father Nicomachus was resident physician to the Macedonian King Amytas II, and his ancestors for some generations back had devoted themselves to medicine. In fact some early writers traced the genealogy of Nicomachus to Asklepios. According to Galen the descendants of Asklepios taught their children not only reading and writing but also τὸ ἀνατέμνειν. What influence the family tradition had on Aristotle's education is uncertain, for it is probable that his father died when Aristotle was quite young. The first certain date in his student life is his entrance into the academy of Plato at eighteen. He remained a student in the academy till Plato's death twenty years later (347 B.C.). About 343 he was invited to the Macedonian court to take charge of the education of the young prince who was later to become Alexander the Great. He had charge of the education of this prince from his thirteenth to his sixteenth year and remained with him until the beginning of the great Persian campaign. About 335 he returned to Athens and founded his

school of Philosophy at the Lyceum. His manner of imparting education was the customary one of social intercourse with his special students. With these he walked (hence the name *peripatetic* applied to his school) and discussed philosophy during the forenoon in the shades of the Lyceum. Afterwards they dined together, all according to a kind of rule laid down by Aristotle himself. In the afternoons he gave public lectures open to all. He was perhaps the first man to build up a great library, and his scientific collections laid the foundations of empirical science. At the death of his great protector, Alexander, he was obliged to fly from Athens to his country home in Eubœa, where he died shortly after in the summer of 322 B.C. The ethics of Aristotle bears the stamp of its author. From beginning to end it is a continuous sequence of arguments, arranged in admirable order, the end never being lost sight of even in apparent digressions.[1]

A. General definition of the good. The foundation of the Aristotelian ethics, as well as of every other moral philosophy, rests upon an analysis of the concept of the good. The good in general is that at which all things aim. The good and the end of action are therefore one and the same. Since, however, there are a great many ends at which things aim, it follows that there are a great many goods, and also that there is one supreme good. For as a matter of fact we do not refer one good to another and that to another and so on *ad infinitum*. We stop somewhere, and the good at which we stop, and to which we refer all other ends, is the supreme good. To know this supreme good is an affair of great importance: first in order that we ourselves may have something to aim at, and secondly that the state may be directed in its activities. Ethics treats of these problems and is a branch of the broader science of politics. It differs from metaphysics, in that its conclusions are generally but not universally true. This is due to the subject matter. Things noble, just, and good present such diversity and manifold rela-

[1] The sources for the life of Aristotle were collected and published in Greek and Latin by Jo. Theophilus Buhle in the first volume of his edition of his works, Biponti, 1791, pp. 3–79. Cf. also L. Robbe, *Vita Aristotelis ex codice Marciano*. Lugduni Batavorum, 1861.

tions that we cannot expect that their study would yield us an exact science.

B. Rejection of the Platonic concept of a universal good. In regard to the nature of the supreme good, there is at least a nominal agreement. Both the masses and the classes call it happiness. But as to the nature of happiness all are not agreed. Some philosophers have said that there is an absolute good, the cause of goodness in all things. But this, he maintains, cannot be because

1. There is no universal idea of good that can be predicated of substance and accident.

2. Good like being can be predicated in all the categories. If it were a common universal idea or entity, it would not be predicated in all the categories but only in one.

3. Furthermore, there is but a single science of all things that fall under one idea. If good were one idea and not many, there should be a single science of all good things. But as a matter of fact there are many sciences of many good things; *e. g.*, medicine, strategy, etc.

C. The supreme good is not pleasure. Others again seek happiness in something that is visible and palpable, such as pleasure, wealth and honor. In regard to pleasure there are two extreme positions. One is that pleasure is the supreme good, and the other is that it is an evil. That pleasure is a good is evident, because if it be added to anything recognized as good, this good is made more desirable, which could not be if pleasure were an evil. On the other hand it is not the only good. "There are many things, too, upon which we should set our hearts, even if they brought no pleasure with them; *e. g.*, sight, memory, knowledge, and the possession of the virtues; and if it be true that these are necessarily attended by pleasures, it is immaterial,

as we should desire them even if no pleasure resulted from them. It seems to be clear then that pleasure is not the good, nor is every pleasure desirable, and that there are some pleasures which are desirable in themselves, and they differ in kind or in origin from the others." [1] Pleasure is simply the result of the functioning of an organ or a faculty in its best condition. Pleasure, therefore, necessarily accompanies the exercise of a function and perfects it; *e. g.*, life. "It is reasonable then to aim at pleasure, as it perfects life in each of us, and life is the object of desire." [2] Since there are good and bad activities there are also good and bad pleasures. "Thus the pleasure which is proper to a virtuous activity is good, and that which is proper to a low activity is vicious." [3] In pleasure, therefore, the supreme good is not to be found, but rather in the activity which gives rise to the good pleasures.

D. The supreme good is not honor. Some there are who place the supreme good in honor. These are the cultivated people of political life. But it is plain that honor cannot be the supreme good because:

1. It depends on those that pay it rather than on the man that receives it. But the supreme good is something intrinsic to the man himself and cannot be taken away from him.

2. The value of honor lies in its being a witness to one's own interior excellence. Honor, which does not come to us from those who are wise and know us well, is but the expression of a fickle popularity and has no true worth.

E. The supreme good is not wealth. Wealth cannot be the supreme good because the life of money making is in itself a life of constraint. Furthermore, we do not want money for its own

[1] *The Nichomachean Ethics of Aristotle.* Translation by Welldon, 1902. Book X, Ch. ii, p. 322.
[2] *Op. c.*, X, iv, p. 327.
[3] *Op. c.*, X, v, p. 329.

sake but only for what it will bring us. "It would be a more reasonable view, therefore, that the things mentioned before, viz., *sensual pleasure, honor and virtue*, are ends than that wealth is, as they are things which are desired on their own account." [1]

F. The supreme good is happiness. The ends of human action, that we have so far considered, have all proved to be particular in character and not universal; mediate and not final. We must seek the ultimate and universal end, therefore, in something else.

The ultimate end of life is to be determined in essentially the same way as we determine the final purpose of any of the particular walks of life. The end in medicine is health; in strategy, victory; in domestic architecture, a house, etc. These are the ultimate ends because, in these particular avocations, all things are done with them in view as the ultimate object to be accomplished. So the end of life must be the final purpose of living. Happiness fulfils this requirement because

1. We always desire it for its own sake and never as a means for anything else.

2. We desire pleasure, honor, intellect and every virtue, partly for themselves and partly as a means to happiness.

G. The supreme good defined also as independence. When we approach the problem from another point of view we come to the same conclusion. The end of life is to triumph over its difficulties, its misfortunes and its sorrows, so that we have within ourselves the source of our own sufficiency. Such a man attains in all things the end of his existence; for no matter what happens, he remains independent and capable of exercising his functions and doing his duty. Such a man is happy, for the self-sufficient is "that which, taken by itself, makes life desirable,

[1] *Op. c.*, I, iii, p. 8.

and wholly free from want, and this is our conception of happiness." [1]

Furthermore, happiness is the most desirable of all things, and at the same time it is not merely one good among many others. Where this is not the case, the addition of any good whatsoever to happiness would make it more desirable. But he who is perfectly happy cannot have anything else added to him—outside of happiness itself—which would make his condition more desirable. "It appears then that happiness is something final and self-sufficient, being the end of all action." [2]

H. The definition of happiness. It will not suffice to say that the end of man is happiness without at the same time giving some kind of a definition of happiness. Especially since we have already said that it does not consist in those things that men ordinarily think that it does: pleasure, riches, honor, and wealth. Since happiness is the supreme good of man, and since the goodness of anything lies in the performance of its own proper function well, the goodness, and therefore the happiness, of man must lie in the performance of his function in an orderly manner.

Has man a function? A cobbler and a carpenter have functions. The eye, the hand, and the foot, and the various parts of the body have their functions. Can it be that the parts of the body have all their own special functions and the whole man has no function? Or can we maintain that the various classes of men have functions and that there is no end that we can point out which is peculiarly proper to man as such? This surely cannot be the case.

The function of man, as such, must be one that is proper to him, and by which he may be distinguished from other things. It is not the mere life of nutrition and increase, for this is common to man and plants, and what we seek is the proper

[1] *Op. c.*, Book I, Ch. v, p. 14. [2] *Op. c.*, Book I, Ch. v, p. 15.

function of man. It is not the life of sensation, for this is shared with horses, cattle and other animals. There remains, therefore, the life of reason. In this life we may distinguish two things

1. The mere possession of reason and intelligence; and

2. The exercise of reason and intelligence. But the mere possession of these faculties cannot mean happiness, otherwise "it would be predicable of one who spent his whole life in sleep."[1]

Therefore, *our happiness consists in the exercise of reason.* The highest exercise of reason is the life of contemplation led by the student in the intuition of speculative truth. Furthermore, this life is the most continuous, for we can live it with fewer interruptions than any other kind of life. "Self-sufficiency, too, as it is called, is preëminently a characteristic of the speculative activity; for the wise man, the just man, and all others need the necessaries of life; but when they are adequately provided with these things, the just man needs people to whom and with whom he may do justice, so do the temperate man, the courageous man and every one else; but the wise man is capable of speculation by himself, and the wiser he is the more capable he is of such speculation. It is perhaps better for him in his speculation to have fellow workers; but nevertheless he is in the highest degree self-sufficient." [2]

From what we have just said it follows that happiness, according to Aristotle, is the exercise of the activities of the soul in accordance with reason; or, what amounts to the same thing, in accordance with virtue. This exercise must, however, be continuous, and the man must be blessed with a certain span of life, and great and overwhelming misfortunes must not befall him. "For as one swallow or one day does not make a spring, so one day or a short time does not make a fortunate or a happy man." [3]

[1] *Op. c.*, Book X, Ch. vi, p. 332.
[2] *Op. c.*, Book X, Ch. vii, p. 336.
[3] *Op. c.*, Book I, Ch. vi, p. 16.

A great deal depends upon the chances of life. True goodness, however, enables one to bear up against life's sorrows and misfortunes. In doing so, there is a certain amount of nobility and, therefore, of happiness. Even the best of men, if overwhelmed by such sorrows as those of Priam, can without any fault of their own fail to attain happiness. "We may safely, then, define a happy man as one whose activity accords with perfect virtue and who is adequately furnished with external goods, not for a casual period of time but for a complete and perfect lifetime." [1]

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[1] *Op. c.*, Book I, Ch. xi, p. 27.

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CHAPTER IX

The Ethics of Reason: Functional Ethics

26. St. Thomas Aquinas. Though many years intervened between the days of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, the great scholastic may be regarded as preëminently the continuer of the school of thought that was founded by the Stagirite. While this is true, he was no more a slavish imitator of the "Magister," as he was wont to call him, than Aristotle himself was of Plato, or Plato of Socrates. He adopted into his own philosophy the elements of truth that he recognized in the systems that preceded his. Only if this is done can there be a progress in science from age to age. Philosophy has tried too often to start anew. The inventor of a new system has been hailed with applause before due consideration was given to the truth of that which was applauded. The philosophy of St. Thomas was not the invention of a brand-new system of thought. On examining his ethics, we see that the general foundation is taken from Aristotle, that the very arguments by which he supports some of his theses are essentially the same as those laid down by Aristotle long before the beginnings of our present era, that, in expounding the ethics of St. Thomas, one must repeat a good deal of what has already been done in the analysis of Aristotle. At the same time one will find much that is distinctly Thomistic and not at all Aristotelic in character.[1]

St. Thomas Aquinas was born in 1225 or 1227, in the castle Roccasecca at Aquino, in the vicinity of Naples. He received his first

[1] St. Augustine naturally had a great influence on the mind of St. Thomas, and might well be given a special consideration in this work were it not imperative to limit the number of types selected for study. For the ethics of St. Augustine consult Joseph Mausbach, *Die Ethik des heiligen Augustinus*, 2 vols., Freiburg, 1909.

education from the Benedictines at Monte Cassino. About 1236 he went to the University of Naples, where he studied grammar, logic, and the natural sciences. Between 1240 and 1243 he entered the order of Friars Preachers, but shortly afterwards was taken captive by his brother. After more than a year's captivity he was enabled by his mother to escape. After a short residence at the convent of his order in Naples he was sent to Rome in 1245. From there he went to Paris and thence to Cologne, where for some years he studied under Albert the Great, the greatest master of science and philosophy of that day. About 1250 he was ordained a priest at Cologne. About 1251 St. Thomas commenced his public lectures at Paris, commenting upon the *Sentences* of Peter the Lombard. In 1257 he received the Doctorate of Theology at the University of Paris, pronouncing an inaugural dissertation on the Majesty of Christ. He lectured at various universities of Europe and was also active in the pulpit. In 1265 he begged to be excused from accepting the Archbishopric of Naples. St. Thomas left behind him many works. In none of them is a harsh word against an adversary to be found. Some were probably composed by dictating to scribes. His great work is the *Summa Theologica.* Besides this may be mentioned the *Summa Contra Gentiles; The Commentaries on Aristotle;* and the *Quaestiones Disputatae.* There is very little of a personal nature in these writings. Another aspect entirely of his character is open to us in the wondrous hymns of the office of Corpus Christi, truly the most beautiful that we possess. Still, he who reads the *Summa Theologica* with appreciation will find in it poetic and mystical ideas of the highest order. In January, 1274, St. Thomas set out on foot to obey the summons of Gregory X, calling him to the Council of Lyons. Taken ill on the way, he died in a Cistercian monastery, March 7, 1274.[1]

A. The foundations of morality. The first division of the second part of the *Summa Theologica* may be regarded as the ethics of St. Thomas. It starts, as does the *Grundlegung zur*

[1] The sources for the life of St. Thomas Aquinas are edited by the Bollandists in the *Acta Sanctorum VII Martii*, Vol. I; *Vita auctore Guilielmo de Thoco, O. P.*, pp. 657–686; *Processus Inquisitionis factae super vitâ conversatione et miraculis recol. mem. Fr. Thomae de Aquino, Anno salutis, MCCCXIX*, pp. 686–716; *Vita auctore Bernardo Guidonis Episcopo*, p. 716. For other sources and a list of biographies cf. Article in "Catholic Encyclopedia."

Metaphysik der Sitten of Kant, with a consideration of the will, and lays down the fundamental fact that all morality must be based upon the voluntary character of human action. In this part of the *Summa* freedom is pointed out by an analysis of experience. It is a fact that there are some acts of which man is master and that besides these he does others for which he cannot be held accountable. In other words, we recognize in the very facts of our own experience that we are responsible agents. We are masters of those acts whose ends we see, and whose execution we command by a power inherent within ourselves. No further demonstration is here given for freedom than this appeal to the facts of human experience. We realize our responsibility and in realizing this we must admit our freedom. Elsewhere he maintains, just as Kant himself does, that the very fact of man's being a rational animal is evidence of his freedom.[1]

B. The apparent ends of human action. Since man is free, and acts for the sake of some end in his moral actions, it is necessary to consider what must be his end in all he does. St. Thomas calls the ultimate end of man beatitude.[2] This is a word that he borrowed from St. Augustine. Its meaning is somewhat the same as that of Aristotle's εὐδαιμονία, happiness. At any rate he attempts to define it by the same procedure that Aristotle used in regard to εὐδαιμονία. Beatitude, he considers, cannot consist in the possession of riches. Natural riches, such as food, clothing and shelter, are desired in order that we may live. By that very fact they are not the ultimate end, for life is more ultimate and we may still ask why should we live?

[1] "There are certain things that do not act from any kind of choice whatsoever, but as if they were driven by others, as the arrow is sent on its way by the archer. Some act, however, with a certain kind of choice, but not a free choice, as irrational animals. For the sheep flies from the wolf in virtue of something very like a judgment by which he deems the wolf would do him injury. Yet this judgment is not free, but implanted by nature. Only that which has understanding can act in virtue of a free judgment. For such a being apprehends the universal concept of good and can, therefore, see that this or that particular object is good. Wherever, therefore, intellect is found, there also is freedom."—I. Q. LIX, iii, *Corpus*. Cf. also I. Q. LXXXIII, i, *Corpus*.

[2] In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, xxvi. ff., he uses the word "felicitas" instead of "beatitudo".

Artificial riches, such as money, are still further removed from being the ultimate end, for they are sought in order that we may obtain those things that make up natural riches, and thus have in greater abundance the means of subsistence.

Nor can beatitude consist in honor. Honor is shown to a person on account of his own inner excellence. It is merely the witness or sign of the perfection of him who is honored. This excellence of a man is measured by his true blessedness, and, therefore, while honor may result from blessedness it can never be its sole constituent.

St. Thomas distinguished between honor and glory. Honor is the showing of reverence to one whose dignity we recognize. Glory is the knowledge that one has of the dignity and perfection of another. This knowledge may either be the knowledge of God or of man. Human knowledge is caused by the object known. Therefore, argues St. Thomas, human glory cannot constitute a man's beatitude, but is the result, like honor, of the inner perfection of the man himself. But God's knowledge is the cause of the things that it knows, and is not itself produced by them. Therefore our happiness and beatitude depend in some manner upon the knowledge that God has of our perfection. Still, while the divine knowledge is a factor in bringing about our blessedness, this in itself does not consist in the divine knowledge, but is something in the man himself who attains to his supreme good. Beatitude, furthermore, cannot consist in power, for power is a principle of action, beatitude a result. Power can be used either in a good or bad cause, beatitude is essentially good. In fact there are four general reasons why beatitude cannot consist in any of these external goods:

1. Beatitude is the supreme good of man and suffers no admixture of evil. But all these external goods can be found both in the good and the evil.

2. Beatitude is the all-sufficing good of man, so that when it is attained nothing else can be wanting to him. This is not

true of the above external goods which may be possessed, and one would find that there is very much still wanting to him.

3. Since beatitude is the supreme good of man, from it no evil or misfortune can flow, but from these external goods many evils may arise.

4. Beatitude must depend upon one's own inherent powers. It is not subject to the accidents of external circumstances, but these external goods are to a very large extent dependent upon what is termed "good luck." To put the matter generally, man's beatitude cannot consist in any good of the body. For, just as the final end of the ship is not that it should be kept afloat but used for navigation, so the final end of man is not the welfare of the body, but that it should be used in obedience to the dictates of reason and under the guidance of the will.

Among the goods of the mind pleasure has the chief claim to be regarded as the supreme good. But pleasure by its very nature is the result of obtaining something which makes us happy. Our supreme good may be regarded either as the thing which makes us happy, and this is not pleasure, or it may be looked upon as the possession of the object of supreme desire. This possession again is not pleasure but gives rise to pleasure as its necessary effect. Pleasure therefore must accompany the supreme good. It is proper to it as the ability to laugh is peculiar to man. Yet man's nature does not consist solely in possessing the faculty of laughing. As regards the mere delights of the body, they result from sensation. Mere sensory pleasures are too narrow to be the sole delight of man. For over and above these, and of infinitely greater extent, are the pleasures of the mind. So that if pleasure in general does not constitute the supreme good, much less can perfect happiness be found in the sensory delights of the body.

C. The true nature of the supreme good. If we look upon the supreme good as the *object* which makes us happy, it is evident

that in no good of the mind, either of sense or of reason, can this object consist. For the mind of itself has neither sensations nor thoughts. It is only the capability of sensing and of knowing. It is capable of knowing but this capability is of no worth without an object of knowledge. It can do good deeds, but this power is useless without something to do. Man is so constituted that over and above his power of knowing he must have an object of knowledge, and over and above his power of willing he must have an object of love. Regarding, then, the supreme good as the *object* which makes us happy, it is evident that this object is to be found outside the mind itself. It does not, however, make the mind happy unless it is possessed by the mind. *Subjectively*, therefore, the possession by the mind of its supreme good is its beatitude. In this sense beatitude is a thing of the mind.

The next question that arises is this: Can the supreme good consist in anything finite? The answer to this question must be given in the negative. The perfect good is that which completely and perfectly satisfies the soul so that there is nothing else that it can possibly desire. The mind, however, apprehends good under the universal "ratio" of good by the power of understanding. It is capable of something more than the mere perception and desire of the particular goods of sense. Consequently, only that which contains in itself the essence of all good can fully and perfectly satisfy the aspirations of the soul whose desires flow from the acts of understanding, apprehending the universal idea of good which contains within itself an infinity of particular goods. This can only be the Eternal Goodness itself. In God alone, therefore, does the supreme happiness of man consist.

D. Conditions determining the morality of an act. In considering the conditions that make an act good or bad, St. Thomas gives us an example of his relation to Aristotle. Aristotle laid down certain particulars that modify the character of an act.

These were: "1. The agent; 2. the act; 3. the occasion or circumstances of the act. Sometimes also 4. the instrument, *e. g.*, a tool; 5. the object, *e. g.*, safety; 6. the manner of doing an act, *e. g.*, gently or violently."[1] St. Thomas started out with these conceptions, but subjected the question to further analysis.

1. *Distinctions between the external and internal act.* He distinguished between the *external* act, or that which is performed, and the *internal* act of the will. All that with which the act is concerned is the object of the external act. The end, that which is known and intended, is the object of the internal act.[2]

2. *The external act.* (a) *Its definition.* If the *external act* is to be good, its *object* must be good. Just as we look upon things as good or bad, according as they have or do not have all the perfection that pertains to them, so, too, acts must have all the relations that are demanded of them if they are to be considered good. If in nature or in art the object produced is lacking in some specific character that belongs to it, it is essentially defective (*e. g.*, an animal born without a head, or a ship built so that it would not float). So, too, an action that deals with another object than it should deal with is fundamentally wrong. The right object is lacking.[3] To love God is an act whose object is essentially good; to center our ambition in the baser pleasures of sensual life is an act whose object is essentially bad.

(b) *The circumstances of the external act.* Not only must the object of the act be good, but also the *circumstances* in which it is done. The circumstances of an act are compared by St. Thomas to the accidental qualities that modify the character of an individual thing. It may have all the essentials and still be so lacking in accidentals that we would have to reject it as bad. So, also, actions which are in themselves good become bad on account of the circumstances in which they are done.[4]

Hunting is in itself lawful; but to go hunting on another

[1] *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book III, Ch. ii, p. 63. Translation by Welldon.
[2] *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. XVIII, vi.
[3] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XVIII, ii.
[4] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XVIII, iii.

man's own private ground and to kill animals that he is keeping as pets is an infringement of his rights and therefore wrong. That which in general is right has become wrong because of an added circumstance: the fact that the animals hunted are not in an open country, free to all, but are kept by a private owner for his own personal ends.

3. *The internal act.* The external act cannot be judged in itself alone. One must also take into consideration the *internal act* of the will from which it proceeds. If this is good, then the action itself is good. If this is bad, then, no matter how good the object of the external act may be, the action has been vitiated in its cause and is itself bad. To give alms is in itself a good act, its external object, the relief of the poor, being good. But one might not intend the external object of the act, caring not at all whether the poor were relieved or not. He might give alms to get a reputation for generosity and wish merely to appear before the people as a great philanthropist. If such should be the case, then the action would be a piece of vanity rather than a work of charity.

The internal act depends upon the intention of the doer and that alone. Its object and its end coincide. The reason for this is that the end is the object of the will. The will chooses the end. This is not true of the muscles, nor of anything else that is concerned with the execution of the act.[1]

The circumstances of the act, St. Thomas holds, cannot make the internal act bad if one really wills that which is good. Supposing this to be the case, one might say that he did not will it at the right time, and that therefore the act of his will is bad. Such an objection as this would refer either to what was willed or to the act of willing. If it refers to what is willed it is against the supposition, viz., that one really intends to do what is good. For to intend to do something when you know it ought not to be done is not to intend what is good. If it refers to the act of willing, then it is evident that one must will what is good at all

[1] *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. XIX, ii, *ad primum.*

times. So that there can be no time when it is wrong to will that which is good. Consequently, the goodness of the act of will depends upon the intention and the intention alone.[1]

E. The standard of right and wrong. St. Thomas, having outlined the end of man as happiness and pointed out the conditions that are requisite for the morality of an act, proceeds to give the criterion by which one is to distinguish between good and bad objects of the will. This criterion is the agreement of the object with reason. The object must be in accordance with reason, if it is good, because the good *as understood* is that which is intended and willed. Reason passes judgment upon conduct, approving some actions as harmonizing with the duties and functions of a man, and rejecting others as incompatible with the dignity of human nature and the particular relations in which the individual is as a matter of fact constituted.[2] Pleasure does not enter into the question at all. The central point is the ideal, given by reason, of the duties and functions of a man.

F. The natural law and the eternal law. In the ultimate analysis, however, the harmony with reason is with the divine, not merely with the human reason. For the light of reason in the human soul points out the way to the true good only in so far as it is derived from the glory of Divine Intelligence. "The light of reason that is within us can make known to us that which is good, and direct our will, only in so far as it is the light of Thy countenance—that is, reflected (derivatum) from Thy countenance."[3] This light of Divine Reason directing all things to their end is the eternal law, the very mind of God. The natural law which human reason must obey is but the manifestation of the eternal law in the mind of man.[4]

[1] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XIX, ii, *ad secundum.*
[2] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XIX, iii. Compare also with Article iv.
[3] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XIX, iv.
[4] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XCI, ii.

This natural law is not made known to reason with that sharp cut clearness that excludes dispute. The innate disposition of man to virtuous acts too often gives way to selfish propensities. Turbulent individuals do exist and were it not for the positive enactments of the social body, and the sanctions of human authority, the peace of law-abiding individuals would be disturbed. Hence the necessity of an authoritative interpretation of the natural law.[1] Theoretically, society might exist on the basis of the natural law. Practically, we need definite pronouncements by established human authority to interpret the natural law, to apply its principles in doubtful cases, and mete out definite penalties when it is infringed. These pronouncements of lawfully constituted authority give us what is known as *human* or *positive law*. If these pronouncements have any binding force whatever it is because they are deductions from, or applications of, the natural law written by God in the heart of man.[2]

The goodness of man and the dignity of human nature consists in a deeper and ever deeper participation in the Eternal Law, by humble subjection to lawfully constituted human authority and unswerving fidelity to the voice of conscience.

This participation is increased by all that develops our sense of duty and gives us an insight into the divine direction by which all things are guided to their final end. It is also increased by the perfection of obedience that harmonizes our will and our actions with God's direction of the universe.

There is here a great similarity between St. Thomas and Kant, and at the same time a great difference. According to both, the ideal of perfection lies in the perfect obedience of the human will to the law of morality. With Kant, the law of morality remained an abstraction. With St. Thomas, it is identified with the essence of God, for there is no distinction between

[1] Cf. *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. XCV, i.
[2] Cf. *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. XCV, ii.

the mind of God and His essence. "From the very fact that God is intelligent it follows that His understanding is His essence." [1] And the eternal law is nothing else than the mind of God directing all things to their end.[2] Whereas with Kant obedience to duty remains an impersonal affair, with St. Thomas it partakes of the intimate relation between one conscious being and another. The categorical imperative of St. Thomas demands no abstract fidelity to a philosophical conception, but the personal consecration of the soul to the Eternal Living, Conscious, Loving God.

G. The functions of the intellectual virtues. Many difficulties lie in the way of such a consecration. In the first place, reason itself is clouded by the things of sense and by lack of analysis and contemplation of the ideals of the mind. It is perfected by practice and there result certain attitudes and dispositions of the mind by which one has a deeper, quicker, clearer insight into the truth and proceeds more easily and securely in the operations of reason. These attitudes and dispositions are the intellectual virtues of understanding, knowledge and wisdom.[3]

H. The moral virtues. All virtue, however, is not mere knowledge. Besides knowing what is right, we must also be able to do it. Therefore, besides the intellectual virtues, there must be also the moral virtues, preëminent among which are the cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude.

"*Prudence* is essentially an intellectual virtue, but according to its subject matter it belongs to the moral virtues, for it is concerned with the right ordering of our actions." [4] From the latter point of view it is classed among the moral virtues.

[1] *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, xiv.
[2] Cf. *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. XCIII, i.
[3] *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. LVII, ii.
[4] *Op. c.*, 1. 2. Q. LVIII, iii, *ad primum.*

Along with the intellectual virtues it has to do with the rectification of reason, and in common with the moral virtues it directs our actions in accordance with the dictates of conscience.

Justice deals particularly with the relations of man and so is preëminently the virtue of righteousness. If one were to desire a filling out of the content of the good of reason, and an explanation of the dignity of human nature, this demand would be met in the Thomistic philosophy by an analysis of the concept of justice. What is good is not in the last resort that which is dictated by the pleasure either of the individual or society, but by the fact that man finds himself bound by certain relations to other intelligent beings. He is free to act or not act in accordance with the obligations imposed by these relations. In justice to them, however, he ought to do so and the just man does do so. For justice is a virtue by which one is inclined to render to God and man the debt that is their due. The virtue by which we quickly and readily give to God that which is his due is termed by St. Thomas the virtue of religion.[1] Religion therefore as a moral virtue is a species of justice.

In carrying out the dictates of reason man meets with two kinds of impediments. The one arises from the allurements of delights that are not in accordance with the dictates of reason. These cloud the understanding and attempt to drive him blindly into action. Against the turbulence of such emotions the good of reason is protected by the virtue of *temperance*.[2] The other hindrance is of an opposite character which arises from weakness and timidity. At times one should act in spite of the serious consequences that will necessarily result. He knows his duty, but he needs strength in order to fulfill it. Again, he must keep on acting in spite of the storm that rages around him. Mere knowledge of what is right will not suffice him. Against the

[1] *Op. c.*, 2. 2. Q. LXXXI, i ff.
[2] *Op. c.*, 2. 2. Q. CXLI, i ff.

overwhelming tide of such a sea of emotions the good of reason is protected by the bulwark of *fortitude*.[1]

I. The gifts of the Holy Spirit. Man's obedience to the voice of reason is assured by the perfection of the virtues, and as far as philosophy is concerned the end of man and its attainment has been sufficiently delineated. But the fullness of the Thomistic concept cannot be realized without the indication, at least, of certain ideas which, properly speaking, belong to theology rather than philosophy. In St. Thomas's own writings such ideas are constantly, and at times almost inextricably, interwoven. It may, therefore, be admissible to supplement, as St. Thomas himself did, the concept of the virtues by that of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

By the virtues man is led to obey the dictates of reason; by the gifts to harken to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

"It is evident that human virtues perfect man, inasmuch as he is by birth subject to the dictates of reason in regard to his internal and external acts. It is necessary, therefore, that there should reside in man higher perfections according to which he is disposed to the movements by which God would direct him. These perfections are called gifts, not only because they are infused by God but also because by reason of them man is so disposed that he is rendered readily subject to the motions of divine inspiration, as Isaias says (L, 5): *The Lord hath opened my ear, and I do not resist: I have not gone back.*"[2]

Between the virtues and the gifts there is still another distinction. Virtue is essentially moderation, the mean between two extremes. It is use without abuse. But the gifts lead to the extreme opposites of vice. What virtue allows, the gifts renounce. Virtue teaches moderation in the use of external goods, the gifts lead us to despise them utterly. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Virtue merely

[1] *Op. c.*, 2. 2. Q. CXXIII, i. Also 2. 2. Q. LXI, ii.
[2] *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. LXVIII, i, *Corpus*.

lessens the violence of the passions that stir us to blind and unreasonable action and subjects them to will and understanding. The gifts lead to perfect tranquillity of emotional life. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land." Virtue moderates the longing of desire. The gifts reject the objects of desire utterly and embrace, if need be, their very opposite, misfortunes and voluntary pain. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Virtue disposes us to give our neighbor his just due when the occasion may demand; the gifts fill us with a fervent desire, as that of hunger and thirst, to be engaged in good deeds for the sake of our neighbor. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill." Virtue inclines us to give where reason dictates that we should give, namely, to our relatives and friends. The gifts make us give readily for God's sake whenever and wherever charity may be needed. "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense." (Luke, XIV, 13, 14).[1]

By the gifts we are still further weaned from the things of sense that the mind may turn itself completely to the truths of reason in the contemplation of which lies its supreme happiness. The fullness of this happiness is not to be found in this life. Abstract philosophical knowledge alone cannot satisfy the mind.

[1] Cf. St. Thomas' *Summa Theologica*, 1. 2. Q. LXIX, iii.

Scotus rejects the opinion of St. Thomas and Richard that the gifts are habits distinct from the virtues, the former disposing the will to the action of the Holy Spirit, the latter to the direction of right reason. The reasons that he alleges are:

(1) This theory falsely supposes that reason moves the will, so that virtue is nothing else than a disposition of the will by which it is inclined to action (*dispositio mobilis in voluntate*).

(2) This opinion does not distinguish the beatitudes from the gifts and virtues.

(3) What is proportionate to the second mover must be proportionate to the prime mover. Consequently, if the will is disposed to obey reason, it must be disposed to obey God, who speaks through reason. Wherefore there is no necessity of one set of habits by which the soul is disposed to the obedience of reason, and another to the action of the Holy Spirit.

This last reason seems to me the only objection of serious import. But if it is a psychological fact that the suggestions of reason and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit act differently, so that one who understands the former might have no conception of the latter, there is solid ground for distinguishing two sets of habits. Cf. Scotus, *Quaestiones in III Librum Sententiarum*, Dist. xxxiv, Q. unica, § v, *Opera Omnia*, Paris, 1894, Vol. XV, p. 476.

We must see truth as it is in itself, eternal and self-subsisting. To this blessed end reason is leading us, and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit are guiding us. It will be attained when in eternal life we shall behold God face to face, revealed to us not by the ideas of the mind, but mirrored in the very essence of the soul.[1]

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[1] Cf. hereon, *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, xxxvii ff.

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PART III

CRITICISM OF MORAL SYSTEMS

CHAPTER I

General Criticism

After our consideration of the types of ethical theory, we come to the more difficult problem of criticism and to the still harder task of constructing our ethical ideal. What attitude must I take myself? What philosophy of life must I adopt? To what center of ambition and activity must I tend? In such questions as these lies the cardinal problem of ethical speculation and the greatest difficulty of actual moral life. When in the future—in business life or wherever I may experience the living problems of ethics—I am weighing the pros and cons for right and wrong, my ethical ideal is certainly going to exert a dominant influence. It is of supreme importance, therefore, that I should give to this problem the most careful consideration. For if my principles of conduct are fundamentally wrong, I can scarcely hope to pass my life without blunders and misfortunes.

In choosing our theory of morals there are certain general considerations that must be borne in mind.

27. A Theory of Morals Must Account for the Facts of Moral Experience. Philosophical theories as well as physical and chemical hypotheses must be subject to the facts of experience. Ethical theories are not exempt from this rule. If, therefore,

there are any facts which lie at the basis of ethics these must constitute the groundwork of ethical theory. I know the facts of moral experience from my own everyday life. I know the struggle between good and evil that has gone on within me from early childhood. I know my falls, I know my triumphs. There have been times when I have felt my guilt keenly, and times again when I was conscious of my innocence. I know my obligation to strive for moral perfection. By the very fact that I know that I am obliged, I know that I can; for when I cannot then I know that I am not obliged.

I feel the responsibility of life and I seek an ethical theory that will help me in my moral duties; that will make them clear and distinct, not obscure and confused; that will accentuate my obligations and not obliterate them from my mind. To seek such a theory of morals is in itself a duty—a duty that is one with my obligation to love truth and honesty. This demand that I experience is not merely a pious and reverent wish, but is also one of the postulates of a consistent logic. Facts are not made to fit the theories, but theories are made to fit the facts. Prior to ethical speculation are the facts of moral life. Any theory of morals which does not account for these facts, is logically unsound.

When we analyze these facts, and attempt to sum up in one word the essence of moral experience, we may say that *responsibility* is the great fact of the ethical order. I direct my life, and I am responsible for its course. I am responsible for the mistakes that I make. I am responsible if I live my days in vain, and never attain to the true goal of human endeavor. I may fail in my work, in business or in any external endeavor, and honestly be able to ascribe my failure to circumstances over which I had no control. But if I am a moral failure, I know that external circumstances are not entirely to blame. I myself have had a part in my downfall, and I myself am therefore responsible.

Responsibility being a fact, I have a right to look with favor upon a theory of morals that takes cognizance of this fact, and to discredit from the very outset any theory which calls it in question.

28. The Facts of Moral Experience Lead to the Concept of Freedom. If it is a fact that man is responsible it follows that he is free. For if man can be held accountable for what he does, he must be able to do or not do, otherwise he could not be held accountable.

But, you say, how do I know that I am responsible? Perhaps my actions are but the play of hidden forces. This question certainly demands an answer, and it can be answered at least to the extent that the fact can be brought out more clearly by a further analysis of the concept of responsibility. The how may remain a mystery. Thus also the fact of gravitation is simple to demonstrate and no one doubts it, and still to this day with all the progress of science no one yet knows the how and the why.

The fact is that you believe in responsibility, upon the evidence of daily experience that cannot be doubted.

1. You believe in *your own responsibility*. If, for instance, others are now, or should be in the future dependent upon you and your daily work for their bread and butter, and you by your own neglect, or by infidelity to your employer, should lose a position which had been the source of your support and of theirs, you are not going to hold yourself guiltless. You will know and feel that you have committed an act for which you were responsible, no matter what manner of philosophy you might entertain about the construction of the universe.

2. You believe in *the responsibility of others*. If some one should do a great injury to your father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter, you will not excuse him on the ground that his action was not his own but the mere result of the play

of invincible forces. You are going to hold him responsible for his crime and act upon your conviction of responsibility.

3. You believe in *the power of your own initiative.* You are convinced that if you let things take their course and do not bestir yourself, you are not going to succeed in the world, or at least that your success will not be so great as it might have been. You are not only convinced that this is so but you know, and everybody else knows, that he who works forges ahead and that the idler is left behind. You know, too, that you can work, that you can bestir yourself. You have personal experience of the fact that there is such a thing as human initiative. You know and believe in the power of your own initiative, no matter what may be your philosophy of the will. Now the power of initiative means responsibility for action. One cannot explain away this fact by ascribing it to the prejudice of education and long standing tradition. Whether you came of yourself to the idea of responsibility, or were first taught it by others, or picked it up from what people generally say, you know that it is a fact by your own personal experience. Fairy tales, superstitions, and false theories dwindle away in the sunshine of actual experience; truths grow and develop. The richer your experience of life, the deeper do you feel your accountability for right and wrong. The longer you work the more certain you become that your success depends not only on opportunity, but also on a vigorous activity by which you make a path in the world for yourself and rise to the occasion when it comes.

It is a fact then that you believe in your own personal responsibility; that you hold others responsible; that you are convinced of the power of your own initiative. If this be so, be honest and believe in all that it implies. It implies that you are free. No machine is responsible. Nothing that is entirely determined by mechanical forces—no matter whether these forces be known or unknown—is responsible. You are responsible

and, therefore, you transcend the physical laws of nature, and are not entirely governed by the mechanism of the universe.

29. The Distinction Between Right and Wrong not that Between Pleasure and Pain. Viewing the systems of morality as a whole we have seen that they fall into two distinct classes: (a) Those which regard morality as variable and conditionate; (b) Those maintaining that it is eternal and absolute. It is of prime importance, therefore, for us to determine whether or not there is anything unconditionally and absolutely good.

In answering this question we must bear in mind that a moral action is the deed of a free being. The word "ought" cannot apply to machines however complex may be their nature. Machines must act, moral beings ought to act, in accordance with the laws to which they are subject. Were man not free, the science of morals would be entirely superfluous. Since, however, he is free; since he is not only a machine but also a responsible agent; since he has powers that can be exerted for the welfare or destruction of himself and others; since these powers are not ruled from without but directed from within, it is necessary that he should be guided and governed by the law of freedom in the performance of his actions. By means of this law man is ruled in his actions, as machines are governed by the laws of mechanics; man, indeed, freely, but machines necessarily. Both man and machines may be looked upon as good when they perform their functions well. This analysis of the nature of goodness was made by Socrates long ago in the dawn of ethical speculation, and it holds to-day as a correct definition of the concept of good action in general. A man, therefore, would be good if he did well all that the conditions of his life imposed upon him. If he acted thus he would be good independently of any other consideration whatsoever. The customs of society might change, yet history would still have to say that he was a good man. He might have felt the keenest

delight in the performance of his duty or it might have entailed untold agony and misfortune. If, in the fulfilling of his function, he felt pleasure, this would not make the performance of his duty any more noble. It might show that he had so triumphed over all baser emotions that he was established in the love of truth and righteousness. A sign may point out, it never makes or increases the excellence of the thing it signifies. If, on the other hand, the performance of his duty brought pain, surely it would not have decreased his own intrinsic excellence. In so far as the conquest of pain indicated a triumph for the cause of righteousness in a battle that called forth the display of great forces, it would be a sign of the sturdiness, strength, and nobility of his character. But here again the sign has nothing to do with the excellence of that which is signified. If, however, Hedonism is right, then pleasure should increase his goodness and pain decrease it.

Furthermore, we recognize in the performance of man's functions that there are some things that are absolutely and unconditionately good and others that are necessarily evil. Suppose that a man is convinced that God exists and is the supreme Master of the universe, directing it to its final end, then as a free agent he must absolutely and unconditionately do all in his power to act in accordance with the direction of God; and for him to do otherwise, to despise God and hate the divine ideals, would be absolutely and unconditionately wrong. No variation in human customs, no amount of pleasure or sacrifice, would have anything to do with the morality of his action. It would be right or wrong according as he did, or did not, live up to the ideals of duty that he perceived. If, again, a man were to wantonly murder another human being he would do something that always must be considered wrong. No changes in the customs of society can give a man the right to take the life of another without any cause and just because he might so will. The intensity of pleasure or pain that he might have felt in the action

or after it—supposing that they did not indicate insanity—might tell us a great deal about the murderer's emotional dispositions, but we should, nevertheless, look upon the act as wrong, no matter how it affected the sensibilities of the criminal. We judge actions as right or wrong independently of personal emotions. Every act has a setting. It should bear certain relations. It should be directed toward the end and ideal of reason—it should be calculated to promote the welfare of others or to maintain the dignity of one's own personality in the struggle for moral perfection and place the human will in unison with the Eternal Wisdom by which all things are directed to their final end. If an act is in harmony with the function of man, if it is consonant with the ideals of human perfection, if, in a word, it bears the relation of means to end that it should bear, it is right; if not, it is wrong.

Therefore, any theory of morals which does not recognize that actions are right or wrong, independently of personal feelings or mere social customs, cannot possibly be true.

30. The Standard of Morals Must be Livable. When one urges against a theory of morality that in practical experience it would not safeguard morals, he sometimes meets with the objection: what if my standard is not livable, it may, nevertheless, be true. But can a standard of morals which in general would open the way for men to disregard the distinction between right and wrong be the true one? Does it not show itself to be empirically false? Certainly that seems to be the case. A theory of morals, like every other theory, must account for the facts. But a theory of morals which allows men at their convenience to call right wrong and wrong right, which, therefore, if lived up to would lead to a general disregard of the principles of morality, is manifestly incapable of accounting for the facts of moral experience, and like every other theory, which fails to account for the facts, must be dis-

carded. That which is empirically false can never be analytically true.

This is evidently the case with Egoistic Hedonism. Were all men told to do whatever increases their own personal pleasure and to avoid everything which decreases it, and if every one really acted upon this standard, surely all that is noble in human conduct and all that the moral consciousness of the race looks upon as right would soon cease to be observed. The grossest crimes could be justified, if one were only sure that he could escape the ordinary penalties that are attached to them. For if men thought that they could sin without detection, they would sin; and the common principles of morality would soon be universally disregarded. Such a theory would not be livable. Its consequences show that it must be radically wrong. It starts out to explain how it is that some actions are right and others wrong and it fails to do so. It is, therefore, to be discarded.

Altruism is really in the same difficulty. As John Stuart Mill himself admits,[1] the ultimate reason why we should seek the welfare of others is that thereby our own personal well-being is best cared for. That being the case, the standard is to be judged not by its proximate but by its ultimate reason for the distinction between right and wrong. That reason is the individual's own personal increase of pleasure. If, according to this standard, men in the last analysis are to seek only their own pleasure, this standard too is as unlivable as that of Egoism itself and must likewise be discarded.

Should, however, Altruism be taken too literally and one's own personal happiness be laid aside, and the welfare of humanity be taken as the sole standard of right and wrong, the law of morality would lack sufficient sanction, and in practice such an Utilitarianism would be unlivable. Let us suppose all the world thought that the only reason why crime should be avoided

[1] "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be obtainable, desires his own happiness." *Essay on Utilitarianism*, Ch. iv, ed. cited, p. 349, cf. *infra*, p. 134.

and the law of right obeyed was that the general welfare of society might be increased. How many would be deterred from doing wrong because of some highly attenuated satisfaction that in some distant day would accrue to the human race, because in their private life of the present they obeyed the law of duty rather than commit a crime that no one would ever know about? Would it not often be said: Why should the intensity of my joy be sacrificed for an infinitesimal increase of happiness that may accrue to the human race? Would we, as a matter of fact, sacrifice our own real deep and intense joys for such a conjectured increase of pleasure for the race? [1] If not, this standard of morals would be unlivable, and, if unlivable, manifest itself as radically wrong.

[1] W. H. Mallock has developed this argument with admirable skill and wealth of example in his article: *The Scientific Bases of Optimism*, "Fortnightly Review," 1889, New Series, Vol. XLV, pp. 80–106.

CHAPTER II

Criticism of the Systems of Conditionate Morality

31. Egoism. Coming now to consider the systems of ethics individually, we turn first of all to the *Ethics of Egoism*, as exemplified in the system of Thomas Hobbes. Looking at his theory we find that it starts out with an assumption. This assumption is that the nature of good and evil is to be explained solely from a study of the emotions with which human goodness and evil are concerned. If this assumption is correct, then, there can, as he said, be nothing more or less in goodness than the turning of the organism to or away from an object. For if this is so there is no free will, there ceases to be any such thing as morality at all. Our emotions are not free. They are the necessary movements of the mind to or away from an object. By emotions we do not choose, and only if there is a free choice can there be a morally good or bad act. The theory of Hobbes, therefore, depends upon the assumption of a psychology. It might be a correct theory if the mental conditions that he assumes really did obtain in our human nature. They do not obtain. We turn to objects in spite of our aversion; we turn away from them in spite of their attraction. In so doing we realize that notwithstanding our aversion the object is good, and no matter how much it may attract us it is evil. Furthermore, as we have seen,[1] man is responsible, and in his responsibility he is free. The foundation, therefore, of the egoism of Hobbes is entirely dependent upon an assumption. That assumption cannot be verified, therefore the theory cannot be maintained.

[1] *Supra*, pp. 123 ff.

As to the further development of his morals, based upon the hypothesis that the rights of the individual have been limited by an early agreement, by which men for the sake of the general welfare gave up their own right to pursue personal ends without regard to the life and happiness of others, this has no basis in fact and can be considered as nothing more than a philosopher's fancy. When anything is seriously proposed in philosophy, it must not only be set forth as something that can be, but must also be accompanied by proofs that demonstrate that it is.

32. Altruism. Perhaps the best exponent of Altruistic Utilitarianism was John Stuart Mill. When, however, we critically examine his argument in its favor, we find that its entire strength depends upon a clouding of the issue by a failure to make a very important distinction. This distinction is the one between pleasure and happiness. When he comes to the proof of the theory, in the fourth chapter of his essay on Utilitarianism, he uses the word happiness to designate the one thing desirable. "The Utilitarian doctrine," he writes, "is, that happiness is desirable and the only thing desirable as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end." [1] Such words as these might sound well even if they came from one who was fundamentally opposed to the theory of Utilitarianism, and had adopted a functional ethics. They mean nothing in themselves. Any argument that is based upon them can also mean nothing until we find what is meant by the term happiness. Fortunately, Mill has defined this early in his essay. "By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure." [2] True it is that there are different classes of pleasures, some of which are higher and others lower. However that may be, the theory supposes that the cen-

[1] Vol. III. *Dissertations and Discussion*, New York, 1882, p. 348.
[2] *Op. c.*, Ch. ii, p. 308.

tral point in one's thoughts, when he thinks about that which he ought to do and what he ought to avoid, is how much pleasure he is going to get out of it. When we realize this, we see at once that, though we might be willing to admit that happiness is the end of moral action, still there can be very grave doubts as to whether or not the one and only thing that a man can desire is pleasure and the absence of pain. This, after all, is a psychological question, and is amenable to experimental research, though as yet very little has been done to solve it. That little, however, does not point to a confirmation of the theory of Mr. Mill.[1]

Looking at the question from the standpoint of every-day experience, we may ask: Do men in general, when they are considering something that ought or ought not to be done, think merely about the amount of pleasure that is to accrue to them from their action? Is there no such thing as disinterested love, or does everybody, when he does anything for a friend, think how much personal pleasure he is ultimately to get out of his kindness? Is the only reason why one gives assistance to another in need the reward that may come from his self-sacrifice, or the feeling of pleasure that he may experience when some poor wretch manifests his gratitude? It may be true that some are entirely mercenary in their actions, but that only goes to show that others are not. To see one's duty is, in popular experience at least, recognized as something different from one's pleasure. The mere fact that a man can act is often sufficient reason for him to act. A man sees that he has some function to perform, say, the support of his family, and he does it because it is his function, without any thought of whether or not it is worth while. Even if it did not pay, even though the pain of the exertion would be greater than the pleasure that

[1] I refer to the experiments of E. Boyd Barrett, S.J. *Motive Force and Motivation Tracts*, London 1911. Under conditions in which one would expect that Hedonistic motives alone could be the grounds for action, 24 to 30 per cent of non-Hedonistic motives were reported. The remaining motives "were far from being *purely Hedonic*." Cf. p. 181.

could possibly accrue to him, nevertheless he would do his duty. If he did not, every one would accuse him of the the grossest infidelity. In other words, some men at least act without regard to pleasure and pain, and in fact they must do so or commit what is admittedly wrong.

Mr. Mill himself recognized this distinction and the recognition was the cause of a long period of depression.

He relates how one day he put this question to himself: "'Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant; would this be a great joy and happiness to you?' And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, 'No!' At this my heart sank within me: The whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down. All my happiness was to have been found in the continual pursuit of this end. The end had ceased to charm, and how could there ever again be any interest in the means? I seemed to have nothing to live for." [1] He then tells of months of depression and how the cloud was gradually lifted, but with something of a change in his ideas. "I never, indeed, wavered in the conviction that happiness is the best of all rules of conduct, and the end of life. But I now thought that this end was only to be attained by not making it the direct end. Those only are happy (I thought) who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even on some art or pursuit, followed not as a means but as an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find happiness by the way. The enjoyments of life (such was now my theory) are sufficient to make it a pleasant thing when they are taken *en passant*, without being made a principal object. Once make them so, and they are immediately felt to be insufficient. They will not bear a scrutinizing examination. Ask yourself whether you are happy,

[1] *Autobiography*, 1873, Ch. v, pp. 133–134.

and you cease to be so. The only chance is to treat, not happiness, but some end external to it as the purpose of life." [1]

Certainly this is a confession that man's function in life is the true end of his own endeavors, and not pleasure. What Mr. Mill recognized in practice he did not embody in theory. One reading the essay on Utilitarianism with the dominant thought that "happiness is the *sole* end of human action" could scarcely come to the conclusion that if he is really to be happy "*the only chance is to treat not happiness but some end external to it* as the purpose of life." Practically Mr. Mill realized and had actual experience of the falsity of his position. Practically he gave it up. This was in the winter of 1826–27.[2] Theoretically he maintained the old position in the essay on Utilitarianism in 1861. But he has never harmonized the contradiction of making happiness the sole end of human action and at the same time aiming at it *en passant*, without making it a principal object.

But is this really a just criticism of Mr. Mill? Does he not say that there is some other reason why an act is good besides the *personal* pleasure that one may get out of it? Does he not maintain that one not only acts for his own personal good but also for the good of others? But the question arises, "Why should one work for the good of others?" The answer comes, "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness." [3] True it is, too, that he tries to make the happiness of society appear as a kind of good in itself, and that it must be so considered because one's own personal pleasure is good. If, however, it is good for me to work for the general happiness, there must be some reason why it is good. The only reason that the system of Utilitarianism can assign is that I get pleasure out of working for the general good.

Furthermore, if in any given instance, my pleasure and the

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 142.
[2] *L. c.*, p. 139. This part of the autobiography was written about 1861.
[3] *Utilitarianism*, Ch. iv, edition cited, p. 349.

general good come into conflict, the general good must be sacrificed, for an action that brings me pain cannot be morally good. Self-sacrifice, therefore, for society could in reality never be justified consistently with the principles of Utilitarianism.

Mr. Mill attempted to elevate the gross Utilitarianism of his predecessors by making a distinction between the higher and the lower pleasures. Between them there is not only a difference in quantity but also a difference in quality. If this is so, then something else besides pleasure must enter into the consideration of happiness. Pleasure is an emotional something, a feeling that accompanies certain activities. If there are higher and lower pleasures, there must be higher and lower activities. For one feeling of pleasure is like another, except for the activities that accompany the one or the other.

The criterion that Mr. Mill gives for the distinction between these higher and lower pleasures is the experience of the cultured. This makes of the cultured classes a supreme board of arbiters who say to the lower ranks of society that they must do so and so. If, however, the lower ranks of society cannot enjoy those higher pleasures that the upper classes boast of, either, because for them they are unattainable, or because, having experienced a little of these higher pleasures, they do not like the way they taste, what is to prevent them from saying, we cannot have the higher pleasures, therefore we will choose the lower? If pleasure is the only thing that goes to make up happiness, surely then each man is to judge for himself what pleases him. If he does not like the boasted pleasures of a certain element of society, no Utilitarian reason can be given why these pleasures should be imposed upon him. This criterion therefore is scarcely sufficient. The evident reason why Mr. Mill introduced his modifications into the theory of Utilitarianism is that he might explain the facts of the moral consciousness, and show that what is commonly considered right and wrong

must be so. These modifications, however, do not help. The hypothesis does not account for the facts, therefore it is to be discarded.

33. Herbert Spencer. The modification of Utilitarianism introduced by Mr. Spencer attempted to account for morality by an increase in the complications of the adjustment of an organism to its environment. But surely the increased complication of one's mental life cannot of itself make a man more or less moral. Otherwise the life of an astute criminal would be a highly good life. The end of moral life is to make the totality of life greater. If that be so, the criminal who longs to escape the clutches of the law has a life which in breadth and length far surpasses that of some peaceful honest farmer. According to Mr. Spencer the criminal must be the better man of the two. Evidently, therefore, something else besides a mere increase in the totality of life enters into the concept of the end of human actions.

The fundamental reason why Spencer fails to account for the facts of morality is that he approaches them from the wrong side. He looks upon moral action as but one type of action in general, and then attempts its explanation by the comparison of human acts with those of lower organisms. He is thus compelled to view action entirely from without and can, therefore, consider only the external act. The internal act which is the seat of morality *par excellence* must of necessity be passed over. This mode of procedure has certain disadvantages.

1. From the external acts of an organism we can learn very little about its mental life. At best we can only conjecture that it may have some kind of mental processes that may have some resemblance to our own. We can never be certain that they have a mental life at all comparable with human consciousness. Animal psychologists have wrestled with the solution of this difficulty so long that they have now given up the

hope of any answer, and are confining their attention entirely to a study of the *behavior* of animals.

2. The definition of moral action which arises from this external point of view as "the adjustment of actions to ends" is ambiguous. The definition contains the suggestion of an internal act, while apparently it is a purely objective criterion. It suggests the idea that an animal by an inner—perhaps even conscious—spontaneity directs its actions to secure a definite end. Certainly what we recognize as moral action in ourselves implies a conscious spontaneous adjustment of actions to an end. We do not look upon the process of digesting a dinner as a moral action, even though it is an "aggregate of actions performed by an organism." Nor would we hold a man morally accountable for what he might do under the influence of hypnotic suggestion. Though in such cases there is an adjustment of acts to ends, there is lacking an element of personal activity that we recognize as essential to moral action.

Is there any such active adjustment of actions to ends by organisms other than man? We cannot be sure of it, certainly, even in the highest types of animals, and have still greater reason for doubting it when we consider the actions of the protozoa. Even if there should be such an active personal adjustment on the part of animals, we do not perceive it, and when we analyze their behavior we are not analyzing voluntary action but certain visible movements back of which lies an unknown and perhaps unknowable "X". This being the case, the apparent advantage that Mr. Spencer's method has of proceeding from the simple to the complex, is more than counterbalanced by the very serious disadvantage of being obliged to explain the known by the unknown. In fact he attempts to find out the nature of one complex by analyzing another of a wholly different character.

3. When we look at an organism from without its life appears to us as its supreme end. If, furthermore, we suppose that

it has conscious processes more or less similar to our own, we may come to Spencer's ideal of making the length and breadth of life a maximum, and conclude that the organism should direct to this end all individual racial and coöperative adjustment of its acts. But when we look at our own life from within, we realize that mere living is a means and not an end. We can and should ask ourselves the question: Is life worth living? We answer yes *if* we make the proper use of our life, take our place in the world, and are faithful to the ideals of human action. To extend our activity and thereby get the most out of life, or as Spencer would put it, to increase the breadth of our life, is indeed a desirable thing, but only *if* our work has been directed in accordance with the ends of human action. Life may be used for good or wasted in evil. It is, therefore, a means and not an end. Spencer points it out as a good and herein he is right, but he mistakes it for the final end, because he approaches the problem of morality from without and relies too exclusively on the facts of external observation. It is necessary in the solution of a problem to consider the facts—but above all the most pertinent facts. In ethics the most pertinent facts are those of our inner moral experience, and to these Spencer did not give sufficient attention.

34. Rousseau. In the theory of morality of Rousseau, we meet with a concept that serves as the groundwork for some of our current pedagogical theorizing. The child's nature is to be allowed to develop of itself, without any hindrance whatever to the manifestation of its impulses. If this is done, then, of necessity, the child will develop into the perfect man. Experience, however, does not show that children, who are given their own way in everything, develop into anything else but selfish and inconsiderate creatures who must learn, by hard experience in the world, lessons that should have been taught them by their mothers. Rousseau's philosophy is simply built upon an

assumption that he did not and could not prove. This assumption was, that there resides in man a power of instinct which directs him to his moral end as certainly as the reflexes of animals lead them to seek what is for the good of their nature. This, however, like his assumption as to the primitive nature of society, is without foundation and therefore not to be considered seriously.

Rousseau's ethics was but the expression of his own vagrant life. He was a wanderer and a vagabond seeking pleasure wherever it could be found. He could not brook the restraint of steady work in any occupation whatsoever. He felt hemmed in by the customs of society. He could not be entirely free from them in his actual everyday life, so he dreamt of a life in which he would be free. He built up in imagination the state of primitive man. He surrounded him with all that he himself loved—the beauties of nature, trees, forests, brooks, meadows, flowers, and fruits. He let him wander here alone, except for occasional meetings with beings similar to himself. He made him as exempt as a solitary beast from the obligations laid down by the principles of right and wrong.

From this dream, which had no other foundation than the psychopathic imagination of its author, he developed his philosophy of life—a philosophy which attracts by the charm of its presentation, but crumbles into dust as soon as we ask: Is it true?

CHAPTER III

Criticism of the Systems of Absolute Morality

When we come to a consideration of modern [1] theories which in some manner admit an absolute morality, we find that they may be roughly classified as looking

1. To a special moral sense for the origin of our ideas of right and wrong;
2. To emotions of one kind or another;
3. To immediate intuition;
4. To reason.

35. The Ethics of the Moral Sense. The only reason that can be put forward for postulating a special faculty for the origin of moral concepts is that the faculties, already familiar to us, are insufficient to account for our ideas of right and wrong. Morality, however, depends upon the perception of an end of human action. No reason can be assigned why the intellect cannot perceive ends and the relation of actions to those ends, as well as it can apprehend a relation between the propositions of a syllogism. One might prefer to call conscience, as it sits in judgment upon conduct, by some other name than reason or intelligence, but there is not the same ground for distinguishing conscience from reason as there is for distinguishing between sight and hearing or between the perceptions of reason and those of sense. The perception of morality is essentially the perception of relations, and whenever a relation is apprehended it may with perfect propriety be referred to intelligence. No sense knowledge

[1] A criticism of the Stoics is omitted because their ethics is intimately bound up with their metaphysics, and this has long ceased to exist as a living system.

takes cognizance of relations. No relation is heard, nor does it have color, nor brightness, nor odor, nor taste, nor is it hard or soft, hot or cold. Therefore we attribute the perception of relations to a faculty that is different from sense. And because there is a fundamental similarity between all relations, their perception may be attributed to a single faculty distinct indeed from sense, and known as intelligence.

The relations that are involved in the perception of right and wrong are those which exist between the act and the immediate and ultimate ends of human conduct. Does a given course of conduct tend to promote the good of the social order? Is it consonant with the dignity of human character? Is it in accordance with the prescriptions lawfully constituted by human authority? Does it conform in the last analysis to the natural and eternal law?—these are the usual points to be considered in discussing the morality of an act. Most civilized men have developed deep-grained principles in regard to the ordinary problems of morality. It requires no reflection for them to decide that evident crimes such as murder and theft are wrong. A decision on such matters is reached without any argument whatsoever by simple intuition in the light of stable and permanent principles of conduct. Sometimes, however, moral problems arise which cannot be settled offhand without reflection and analysis and careful reasoning. The perception of right and wrong is, therefore, a question of mere intuition on some occasions, but of more or less intricate reasoning on others. It is a question of simple intuition when the relation of the act as conformable or nonconformable with the ends of human action is a self-evident truth. It is a question of reason whenever the perception is difficult, and requires some consideration before the mind can see just how the act should be related to its end.

36. **The Ethics of Sympathy.** Though emotions do not enter

into the bare perception of the morality of an act, nevertheless they have a great deal to do with the execution of acts. There are a number of emotions that affect one's moral character. Preëminent among these is the emotion of sympathy, which tends to prevent cruelty. Those who are looked upon as moral degenerates often give evidence of the lack of this emotion even in early childhood. Children are to a certain extent normally cruel. It takes time for them to realize that others suffer, that flies or other insects that they pull to pieces may experience pain even as they themselves do when injured. A child, however, that persists in his cruelty as the years advance, who is cruel not only to animals but to his parents, who could torture or even kill his own mother [1] without feeling any horror at his deed, is certainly lacking in some quality of mind which does a great deal to keep normal individuals from crime. Between the normal and the abnormal there are all degrees of approach. Normal individuals have more or less help from the emotions that cluster around right and wrong actions. The sympathetic man is more likely to be a good man than one who is absolutely devoid of any power of feeling for others. The man, by birth or environment subject to strong temptations, will have more opportunities of doing wrong; but he does not do wrong by the mere fact that he is subject to strong passions. The aids to morality do not constitute morality itself; nor do hindrances to morality mean that it is lacking. In the making of a morally good man two things are necessary: (1) A normal understanding, by which one can see the relation of acts to their ends, (2) a will that acts in spite of desire, and in obedience to the judgments that intellect passes upon conduct. The emotions may help or hinder. They do not constitute morality. True goodness has its residence, not in emotion, but in will.

When Adam Smith, therefore, maintained that we know what is right and wrong by our ability to sympathize with a

[1] Such cases are really to be found in the history of moral degenerates.

course of action, he was accentuating the importance of a very valuable psychological aid to the development of a good character. This ability to sympathize with others not only influences the development of our own character, but gives us also a very strong realization of the injustice that is done to our fellow men and thus sharpens our perception of right and wrong. Sympathy, therefore, is an important factor in the development of character, and has its value in directing our attention to questions of right and wrong in the persecutions to which our fellow men are often subjected.

Full credit having been given to sympathy as a factor in the development of character and as an aid to the perception of right and wrong, we must nevertheless conclude that sympathy is not the sole factor in moral judgments nor the real means by which we perceive a difference between right and wrong. Sympathy is an emotional state. No emotional state perceives anything. It is rather the reaction of the mind to what it perceives. Perception must be attributed to something different from emotion. Perception is an intellectual not an emotional act. We perceive things that are self-evident immediately by intelligence. We assent to truths which are not self-evident when we realize that the conclusion follows from the premises. If in the perception of morality we should follow our sympathies alone, we should be unable at times to distinguish between just retribution and an unjustifiable persecution. We must know whether or not our sympathies are misplaced. We must correct sympathy by reason. Reason, therefore, and not sympathy is the ultimate channel through which we receive the knowledge of right and wrong.

37. The Ethics of Intuition. The attempt to account for our ideas of right and wrong by the bare perception of the understanding with Cudworth, at least, was based upon the idea that there is something in an act that can be perceived as moral,

just as there is something in an object that can be perceived as color. The perception of morality, therefore, is a question of intellectual vision. There must be something right and wrong in acts independent of our personal desires. This view loses sight of the fact that moral actions as such do not exist. We do not see an act that we are about to perform as we apprehend an object of sense. What we do perceive, is the relation of our powers of action to something that is to be done and its setting in the complex that arises from our position in life. Morality is, therefore, in one sense essentially relative. It concerns the relation of acts to ends. But there are some relations of acts to ends that should obtain, no matter how we may feel about it, or how we are going to be pleased or displeased. In this sense, there is an absolute morality. Its perception is at times so simple that it involves no reasoning, and in such cases it is a question of the immediate perception of understanding. In other cases the affair is not so simple. To find out what we ought to do we must consider and weigh a great many pros and cons, and in finally making up our mind we make use of reason. The perception of morality is thus a matter both of simple intelligence and the power of reason.

38. The Ethics of Reason. As Paulsen has remarked: "What Kant looked upon as his own peculiar service is his fundamental error—the banishment of every teleological consideration from ethics." [1]

The main point in the Kantian ethics is the attempt to show that there is no end of morality other than morality itself. Obedience to law is imperative and no reason can be given *why* one must obey. For as soon as you answer the question "why," you say that one must be obedient *if* he wants to accomplish so and so. At once the imperative that commands the act becomes conditionate, and you no longer have an absolute morality.

[1] *Immanuel Kant*, Stuttgart, 1899, p. 330.

But as a matter of fact it is impossible for a moral being to do a moral act without an end in view. Therefore in one sense all moral acts are relative, being conditioned by some end or other. For to act with a purpose means nothing more than to act with reason. Unless one has a reason for his action it is whimsical or blind and unworthy the dignity of a moral being. If one acts with a purpose his act is conditioned by that purpose. Still morality can be absolute in spite of the fact that moral acts are relative and conditioned by the end. This can only be if the end is absolute, and the end is absolute if the act must be referred to it and can be referred to no higher end. Since in this scheme of ends some one must be supreme, and all acts are necessarily referred to the supreme end, there must be an absolute morality, although it is lived out by actions conditioned by the ultimate end. Kant, therefore, in trying to defend the absolute character of morality against the subjectivism of the Utilitarians went further than it was necessary for him to go, further indeed than the analysis of morality makes it possible to go.

But, even according to Kant, there is a reason for morality. That reason in the ultimate analysis is reverence for the law. Why must I do right? Not that I may have pleasure or be happy, but because I must reverence the law by my obedience. The end of morality is not centered in myself, but in the law. The goodness of an act is still conditioned, even though the condition has nothing to do with me personally. *If* you would reverence the law you must do so and so.

What is this law that demands my reverence? With Kant it is but a product of the abstraction of my mind. It has no existence apart from the mind that conceives it. I myself therefore am bound by myself. But what I myself do I can undo. Therefore, if I make the moral law, I have a right to break it. This is not so. Morality does not depend upon myself, therefore the moral law must have a source outside myself and cannot be purely an abstraction of my mind.

Kant was right as far as he went. I must revere the law, I must honor the nobility of the human person, but such reasons do not suffice to make morality absolute and eternal. St. Thomas went one step further. The law of morality does exist outside of the mind. It is identical with God Himself whom Kant was forced to postulate by his analysis of morality. According to St. Thomas, God not only exists, but He is the Eternal Law, a Living Personal Being to whom we are bound by the ties of morality. Though we seek happiness and have every right to seek it, though true happiness is the supreme end of all our moral actions, still in the last analysis the reason why any act leads to true happiness must be that it is in harmony with the Eternal Law by which all things are directed to their final end.

CONCLUSION

The Ethical Ideal

Looking at the history of moral theories as it now lies before us we see that there is nothing in Hedonism which is not to be found in the morality of duty. Hedonism has only pleasure to offer us. It centers our activity in the struggle for existence and bids us strive above all for the pleasures of life; for happiness. The functional ethics of duty at the same time points out happiness as the end of life. It offers all that Hedonism offers. To the superficial mind the chasm between absolute and conditionate morality seems to be bridged over. Analysis appears to have picked and torn to pieces and sifted the opposing systems till there remains nothing but one and the same idea at the root of both. This idea is termed by one school either pleasure or happiness. The other refuses to make use of the word pleasure and insists on using happiness alone as the true designation of the end of man.

It is only to the superficial gaze that the difference which has so long separated the great moralists seems thus to dwindle into nothing. Absolute and conditionate morality cannot be harmonized by any powers of analysis whatsoever. If recent Hedonists approach somewhat nearer than their predecessors to the absolute morality of duty, this is done at the expense of logical consistency, and by the introduction of ideas which are not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the school.

The ultimate difference between the ethics of pleasure and the ethics of duty is still to be pointed out by these very words: *pleasure* and *duty*. Hedonism centers ambition in pleasure, functional ethics in the performance of duty.

Pleasure, after all, is not the end of man. Long ago Plato pointed out the insufficiency of the Hedonistic concept by calling attention to the fact that no matter what our theory of morals we must distinguish good pleasures from bad, and something else besides pleasure must be the ground for this distinction.[1]

Pleasure has been aptly compared to the drop of oil that lubricates the machinery and makes it run smoothly and noiselessly without grating and friction. As oil is to the engine so is pleasure to the machinery of our life.

Work is pleasant if it does not transcend the limits of painful fatigue. It is the pleasure of exercise that makes it possible for a gang of workmen to sing and keep time to their song with the stroke of their picks. If work involves a little skill, there is pleasure in doing well and neatly the task that is before us. So great is the pleasure of intellectual work that those who are engaged therein look upon rest as a burden, a condition which makes work possible. True it is that in the crush of life in our great cities the work of many a poor unfortunate is prolonged beyond the normal limits of fatigue. Men return to their posts morning after morning with incomplete rest and their daily work is scarcely begun before it has become the burden of the day. True it is that many practical Hedonists exist; men living for pleasure alone who seeing no meaning or purpose in life, who, knowing not the pleasures of duty, by their daily toil merely buy the gratification of the evening's debauch. But there are men whose daily existence is a happy one and the pleasure of work is the drop of oil which makes the machinery of their life run smoothly. That all do not perceive the pleasure of work does not show that it has no existence. The engine that is always driven to the uttermost limit, which is run in order that it may be oiled and not oiled that it may run smoothly, will pound and rattle and be reeky and dirty in spite of all.

Pleasure is not the end, as many a one will testify who com-

[1] Cf. *supra*, p. 92.

menced life in the frivolous thoughtlessness of childhood, and ere youth had faded his life was weighted down with the unbearable burden of meaningless days, and his eyes looked forth upon the barren waste of a hopeless future.

It is vain for us to center our ambition and our toil in the mere pleasures of life, no matter whether we interpret the word pleasure in its highest or its lowest sense. Man is capable of perceiving and cherishing ideals, and his ideals alone can give a meaning and a purpose to his existence. Without these he is doomed, sooner or later, to the most tedious monotony, to that weariness of life, to that hopeless vision of the future which blights the fading youth of thousands and clouds with despair the waning days of the godless rich.

The ethical ideal is not to be found in pleasure but in duty. Nor can we identify duty with pleasure. Seek pleasure above all, and you will be false to duty and the end of your days will be empty and void. Seek duty above all, and your life will be crowned with the fullness of joy and filled with the consciousness of fidelity to noble ideals.

But what is my duty? Fidelity to your responsibilities. What are my responsibilities? These you know already by experience. The first that you perceived were those of the family. As you passed from infancy to childhood you commenced to realize that the world did not exist entirely for you, but you in some manner for the world. Your parents commenced to hold you responsible for your acts and you first experienced the meaning of "ought" in the personal relations in which you existed towards others. Very early, too, you learned by instruction and your own reflections that you were not merely responsible in time, but also in eternity; that you were not merely governed by human legislation, but also by divine authority; that you were not only held accountable by your parents, but also by that still small voice speaking within you, laying down with absolute demands the dictates of the Natural Law, speaking to you

with the authority of the Eternal God. As life developed, the extent of your relations in human society became more and more complicated. Your responsibilities multiplied as you entered further and further into relations with the members of society—your responsibility to obey lawfully constituted authority, your responsibility to be faithful to trusts that you had freely taken upon you, your responsibility to help and succor from your own greater abundance those who came across your path in poverty and distress.

We exist in the social order. Our life is inextricably interwoven with the lives of others. Do what we may, we cannot escape from the complex system of moral ends. We live and act in relation to others and from these relations arise our duties to mankind. We often have the opportunity of being of service to others who come across our paths; to those whom we know and love; to those to whom we speak but once and never see again. To neglect such opportunities would be equivalent to a refusal to perform the functions of a human being. Such a refusal would be wrong in proportion to the intimacy of our relationship to him whom we refused to help, and to the extent of his necessity.

That the service would entail discomfort to ourselves would be no excuse for refusal. That it would be a pleasure for us would not be the real reason for action, but rather that we could exercise the function of a man in using our human powers in being of service to a fellow being. To increase to the very uttermost our capacity of being of service to others is the end of man in the social order.

Though this ideal is the most easily appreciated, and is placed by many at the very summit of human perfection, it is in reality secondary rather than primary. Prior to my duty to others is the duty to myself—not however in Mill's sense that "no reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable except that each person, so far as he believes it to be

attainable, desires his own happiness." The question is independent of my personal pleasure. If I am to be of service to others, I must have something to give them, and the greatest gift that a man can give to his fellow man is the memory of a pure and perfect character. If I live with others, my character impresses itself upon those with whom I come in personal contact. My duty to them implies a prior duty to myself. I am bound to realize within myself the ethical ideal that my virtues may inspire others and not, on the contrary, my vices degrade them. Prior, therefore, to my duty to others is the still greater moral obligation of the transformation of my natural self with its pettiness and passions, with its tendency to self-aggrandizement and to all that is of the earth earthy. To transform this self into the ideal self, where reason dominates emotion in purity and peace, is a duty that I owe primarily to myself, secondarily to those with whom I come in personal contact. It is a duty that is most intimately connected with the exercise of freedom for which I am responsible.

We have a twofold freedom: a freedom of choice and a freedom which is attained by the conquest of passion.

Freedom of choice is ours by birth, but freedom from passion is ours only by acquisition. All men are equal as to the mere fact of their possessing the freedom of choice. All men are not equal, even at birth, in the extent of their freedom from passion. The dispositions of some are much more passionate than those of others. Some have great struggles, some have little. But here in the conflict between our two sets of emotions, here in the striving for the mastery of our higher and lower selves, here is to be fought the mighty battle to which we must bring all our forces, here is the great and all-important struggle of life, and the final and complete victory of the higher self over the lower is the personal ethical ideal for which every child that is born into the world must strive.

He only is truly free whose will dominates his emotions,

who not only possesses an abstract freedom of choice but actually uses it in fidelity to his ideals. How vain is the search for that freedom which allows us to satisfy without restraint the cravings of nature! Such a search is but to give way to the forces that subject the higher self to the lower and to exclude forever the hope of perfect freedom. The ethical end is not to be expressed by pleasure. We must center ambition in perfect fidelity to our responsibilities, to our daily duties, little and great, one and all without exception, and by triumphing over the allurements of sense conquer passion and attain to freedom.

If this be so, far from seeking pleasure we must learn to shun it. In the conflicts that arise in life, what we call duty stands on one side, what we call pleasure on the other. He who would be sure of perfect triumph must deny himself many lawful pleasures, that when the time comes he may be able to renounce readily and promptly the unlawful gratification at that critical moment when hesitation means defeat. Great crises are, however, comparatively few. Little ones are many. By steadfastly keeping our eyes fixed on the ideal of duty, by sweeping aside daily and even hourly the little pleasures that conflict with that ideal, our strength grows and increases until we are ready for the bitterest conflict with assurance of victory.

The ethical ideal leaves many questions unanswered till it is supplemented by religion. True it is that ethics can point to a final happiness in the triumph of virtue, to the dwindling away of the allurements of sense before the ever-growing perfection of our moral being, to the advent of the final joy of perfection when sin shall no longer attract as it did before, to the final consciousness of fidelity to noble ideals. But ethics cannot assure us of strength and length of days for the perfection of our labors. Ethical ideals, as a matter of fact, are insufficient to lead the majority of mankind to the goal of perfection. Ethics may delineate; it is religion that accomplishes.

Ethical concepts, however, prepare the way for religion. A

consideration of the facts of the moral life affords data of supreme importance. We know by experience that we are responsible agents, that we can and do perceive definite ends of human action and tend to these ends by powers inherent within ourselves. If that be so then man, to some extent at least, escapes the mechanism of the universe. Natural science points to the machinery of the cosmos, ethics to the responsibility of human action. No one-sided view is true. We can no more explain man purely in terms of motion than we can develop biology and physics entirely from concepts of purpose. Side by side with the machinery of the universe exists the moral order and a world of free and intelligent beings. With the world of freedom and responsibility we are constantly face to face. We have a more intimate experience of the microcosm within than of the macrocosm without. Therefore we cannot deny the facts of our moral life in order to explain the world and man by the laws of mechanics.

Natural forces fail to explain all things because the universe as a whole is not a mere machine. For no machine is responsible. But man is responsible. Therefore he is free and transcends the mechanism of the cosmos.

If we must admit facts that mechanics cannot explain, then we must seek for the origin and the source of the present order outside the laws of nature. The collocation of atoms in a primal nebula can at best account for subsequent mechanical events and for such events alone. The facts of moral experience point out the insufficiency of any such hypothesis for the explanation of man and nature as a whole. They lead us from the moral law to the Eternal Law, from human imperfection to Infinite Goodness, from the categorical imperative of duty to the voice of God speaking to the soul of man. For if man himself transcends the mechanism of the universe, then the source and origin of all must be sought outside of nature in a Moral Being from whom morality itself has been derived.

From this point of view we have a deeper insight into the ethical ideal. In the complex system of the moral relations of man to other intelligent beings, one relation stands out above all others and unifies, cements, makes perfect, and firmly establishes the concept of moral obligations. This is the relation of man to God, of the finite mind to the Infinite Wisdom. The dictates of reason sitting in judgment upon conduct are but the shadows of the Eternal Light in the mind of man. The moral law is but the expression of the Eternal Law, and has the source of its obligation in the being of God. Taking my part in the world and working for the welfare of others is but to perform my duty as a servant of the Eternal Wisdom. Thus ethics becomes absorbed in religion.

Religion gives me the complete and final reason for the great struggle between my higher and my lower self. Why should it be? For Thy sake, oh Lord, that I may prove myself worthy of Thee. Thou art the Living Ideal of moral perfection for which I am striving. Thou art the Eternal Lord. Thou art the Ideal of my soul. Thou art my true Love, and besides Thee there is none other. All human pleasure that separates me from Thee is sacrificed. I pass from time to eternity, transcending the world of sense. Little by little, by the very fire of my passions, my soul is purified, till with innocent hands and a pure heart I come at last to Thee—the Eternal Wisdom whom I have served, my God and my All.

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